OXFORD

DIVINE EPIPHANY

in GREEK LITERATURE & CULTURE

GEORGIA PETRIDOU

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This has been a long voyage, even by Kavafis's standards. Here is the place where I write about the harbours I visited and the *Theoi Sōtēres*, who rescued me from numerous sea storms and monsters of the type your soul sets in front of you. This book started as a doctoral thesis at the University of Exeter, where I met several divinities who spurred my ships forth on a fair wind: my supervisor Richard Seaford, my mentor Stephen Mitchell, and my internal and external examiners John Wilkins and Ian Rutherford. They are all to be sincerely thanked for guiding me expertly and patiently through my first years of study of Greek Literature and Religion, and not withdrawing their support long after the umbilical cord was cut. Special thanks are owed to Stephen Mitchell, Tim Whitmarsh, and John Wilkins. Without their encouragement I very much doubt whether the first draft of this book would have ever left my drawer. During my Exeter years I ventured many times to Oxford to pillage the rich libraries and museum collections and it was during one of these visits that I talked more to Verity Platt, who over the years not only became a constant correspondent on all matters related to epiphany, but a friend too. I want to thank her wholeheartedly for all her insightful comments and advice, and especially for reading earlier drafts of chapters 2 and 5.

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But it was at the Max-Weber Kolleg at the University of Erfurt, and while holding a research fellowship with the ERC-funded research programme Lived Ancient Religion (LAR): Questioning Cults and the Polis Religion, that I found

my Ithaca. Armed with generous financial support and encouragement from Jörg Rüpke, the principal investigator of the LAR project, and the superior editorial skills and expert advice of Jan Bremmer, who was a fellow at the Max-Weber Kolleg at the time, the whole project came to fruition and the final manuscript reached the publisher. I want to thank Jan Bremmer wholeheartedly for his expert readings, generous guidance on matters of both form and content, and for his good humour, which made working with him a sheer pleasure. Jörg Rüpke and the LAR project are also to be thanked for helping me with the sourcing of the images. I am also grateful to Julia Kindt, who was a fellow at the Max-Weber Kolleg at the time, for discussing with me all sorts of tricky matters related to babies, books, and publishers over copious amounts of coffee at the university library and for finding the time in her busy schedule to read and comment expertly on a draft of the whole book. My time at Erfurt became all the richer and more fruitful because of the discussions I had with Richard Gordon, one of my personal academic heroes and a leading expert on all matters of ancient religious practices and beliefs.

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This book is dedicated to my son, Ypatios, my one and true e*piphaneia*.

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List of abbreviations

The abbreviations of the journals follow those of the *Année Philologique*; while the abbreviations of the ancient works and authors follow those of the ninth edition of the Liddell–Scott–Jones dictionary (*LSJ*).

APS	Cambitoglou, A. and Trendall, A. D. eds, *Apulian Red-Figured Vase-Painters of the Plain Style*, Monographs in Archaeology and Fine Arts 10, New York, 1961.
AvP VIII	*Altertümer von Pergamum* Bd. VIII 3: *Die Inschriften des Asklepieions*, ed. Ch. Habicht, Berlin, 1969.
AvP XIII	*Altertümer von Pergamum* Bd. XIII: *Das Demeter-Heiligtum*, ed. C. H. Bohtz, Berlin, 1981.
Beazley (*vel ARV²*)	Beazley, J. D., *Attic Red-Figure Vase Painters*, 2nd edn, Oxford, 1963.
Beekes	Beekes, R., *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, 2 vols, Leiden, 2009.
BNP	*Brill's New Pauly*, Leiden and Boston, 2002–.
CAF	Kock, T., *Comicorum atticorum fragmenta*, 3 vols, Leipzig, 1880–8.
CEG	Hansen, P. A., ed., *Carmina epigraphica graeca*, vols 1–2, Berlin and New York, 1983–9.
CIG	*Corpus inscriptionum graecarum.*
CRAI	*Comptes Rendus des Séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.*
GEF	see West.
GVI	Peek, W., ed., *Griechische Vers-Inschriften I: Grab-Epigramme*, Berlin, 1955.
D-K	Diels, H. and Kranz, W., *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th edn, Berlin, 1952.
E.M.	Gaisforth, T., ed., *Etymologicum magnum*, Oxford, 1848, repr. 1969.
Eust.	*Eustathii archiepiscopi thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Odyseam et Iliadem*, Lipsiae, 1825–9.
Farnell (*vel Cults*)	Farnell, L. R., *Cults of the Greek States*, Oxford, 1896–1909.
FD III	*Fouilles de Delphes, III: Épigraphie*, Paris 1929–.
FGrHist	Jacoby, F., *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker,* Leiden, 1923–58.
GGM	Müller, K., ed., *Geographi graeci minores*, Paris, 1855, repr. 1965.
Graf (*vel Kulte*)	Graf, F., *Nordionische Kulte*, Rome, 1985.
Harpocr.	Dindorf, G., *Harpocrationis lexicon in decem oratores atticos*, Oxford, 1853.
Hesch.	Latte, K., ed., *Hesychii alexandrini lexicon* (A–O), Hauniae, 1953.
I.Chios	McCabe, D. F., *Chios Inscriptions: Texts and List*, The Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia, The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1986.

I.Cos	Paton, W. R. and Hicks, E. L., *The Inscriptions of Cos*, Oxford, 1891.
I.Cret	Guarducci, M., *Inscriptiones creticae*, 4 vols, Rome, 1935–50.
I.Delos	*Inscriptions de Délos*, 7 vols, Paris, 1926–72.
I.Didyma	A. Rehm, *Didyma, II: Die Inschriften*, ed. R. Harder, Berlin, 1958.
I.Eleusis	*Eleusis: The Inscriptions on Stone. Documents of the Two Goddesses and Public Documents of the Deme*, ed. K. Clinton, Athens, 2005.
I.Ephesos	Wankel, H. et al., eds, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*, I–VII, *IK* 11–17, Bonn, 1979–81.
I.Erythrai	Engelmann, H. and Merkelbach, R., *Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*, I–II, *IK* 1–2, Bonn, 1972–3.
IEG	West, M. L., ed., *Iambi et elegi graeci ante Alexandrum cantati*, vols 1–2, Oxford, 1971–2.
IG	*Inscriptiones graecae*, 1873–.
IGBulg	Mihailov, G. ed., *Inscriptiones graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, 4 vols, Sofia, 1956–70.
IGUR	Moretti, L., ed., *Inscriptiones graecae urbis Romae*, Rome, 1968–91.
I.Iasos	Blümel, W., ed., *Die Inschriften von Iasos*, *IK* 28 1/2, Bonn, 1985.
IK	*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien*, Bonn, 1972–.
I.Knidos	Blümel, W. ed., *Die Inschriften von Knidos I*, *IK* 41, Bonn, 1992.
I.Lindos	Blinkenberg, C., *Lindos: Fouilles et recherché, II: Fouilles de l'acropole: Inscriptions*, Berlin, 1941.
I.Magnesia	Kern. O., ed., *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*, Berlin, 1900.
I.Milet	Herrmann, P., *Inschriften von Milet: Milet: Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen seit dem Jahr 1899*, vol. 6, parts 1–3, Berlin, 1997–2006.
I.Mylasa	Blümel, W. ed., *Die Inschriften von Mylasa, I: Inschriften der Stadt*, *IK* 34, Bonn, 1987; *II: Inschriften aus der Umgebung der Stadt*, *IK* 35, Bonn, 1988.
I.Olymos	McCabe, D. F., *Olymos Inscriptions: Texts and List*, the Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia, the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1991.
IosPE I²	Latyshev, V. ed., *Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini graecae et latinae*, 3 vols, St Petersburg, 1885–1901, vol. 1, *Inscriptiones Tyriae, Olbiae, Chersonesi Tauricae*, 2nd edn, St Petersburg, 1916.
I.Pergamon	Fraenkel, M., ed., *Die Inschriften von Pergamon*, vols 1–2, Berlin, 1890.
I.Priene	von Gaertringen, F. H., ed., *Die Inschriften von Priene*, Berlin, 1906.
I.Smyrna	Petzl, G., ed., *Die Inschriften von Smyrna*, vol. 2, 1, *IK* 24, 1 Bonn, 1987.
I.Stratonikeia	Şahin, C., ed., *Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia*, vol. 1, *Panamara*, Bonn, 1981, with vol. 2, 2, *Neue Inschriften und Indices*, 1990.
JDAI	*Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts*
JÖAI	*Jahreshefte des österreichischen archäologischen Instituts in Wien*

K-A	Kassel, R. and Austin, C. eds, *Poetae comici graeci*, Berlin, 1983–.
Kannicht (vel *TrGF*)	Kannicht, R., ed., *TrGF*, vol. 5: *Euripides*, 2004.
LÄ	*Lexicon der Ägyptologie*, Göttingen, 1975–92.
LIMC	*Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae*, Zurich, 1981–99.
L-P	Lobel, E. and Page, D. L., eds, *Poetarum Lesbiorum fragmenta*, Oxford, 1955.
LSAM	Sokolowski, F., *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure,* Paris, 1955.
LSCG	Sokolowski, F., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques*, Paris, 1969.
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., and Jones, H. S., *A Greek–English Lexicon*, 9th edn, Oxford, 1940; Supplement, Oxford, 1996.
LSS	Sokolowski, F., *Lois sacrées des cités grecques: Supplément*, Paris, 1962.
MAMA	*Monumenta Asiae Minoris antiqua.*
MDAI(A)	*Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* (Athens).
MEFRA	*Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'Ecole française de Rome*
M–W	Merkelbach, R. and West, M. L., eds, *Fragmenta hesiodea*, Oxford, 1967.
Nilsson (vel *GGR* i^3)	Nilsson, M. P., *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, 3rd edn, Munich, 1967.
NP	*Der Neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike*, ed. H. Cancik, H. Schneider, and M. Landfester, Stuttgart, 1996–.
NT	Aland, K., Black, M., et. al., eds, *The Greek New Testament*, Stuttgart.
OCD	Hornblower, S., Spawforth, A., and Eidinow, E. eds, *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edn, Oxford, 2012.
ODCMR	Price, S. and Kearns, E., eds, *Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion*, Oxford, 2006.
OGIS	Dittenberger, W., *Orientis graeci inscriptiones selectae*, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1903–5.
Pfeiffer (*vel* Pf.)	Pfeiffer, R., *Callimachus*, 2 vols, Oxford, 1949–53.
P.Gen.	Gaffino Mœri, S., Gällnö, S., Poget, N., and Schubert, P., eds, *Les papyrus de Genève*, vol. 4, Geneva, 2010.
PMG	Page, D. L., ed., *Poetae melici graeci*, Oxford, 1962.
Powell (*vel CA*)	Powell, J. U., ed., *Collectanea alexandrina*, Oxford, 1925.
P.Oxy.	*The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, London, 1898–1995.
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum.*
Radt	Radt, S., ed., *TrGF*, vol. 4: *Sophocles*, 1997.
Raubitschek (*vel DAA*)	Raubitschek, A. E., *Dedications from the Athenian Akropolis: A Catalogue of the Inscriptions of the Sixth and Fifth Centuries* BC, with the collaboration of Lilian H. Jeffery, Cambridge, MA, 1949.
RE	Wissowa, G. et al., eds, *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft*, Stuttgart and Munich, 1893–.
SEG	*Supplementum epigraphicum graecum*, 1923–.

SFT	Stählin, O., Früchtel, L., and Treu, U., eds, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, vols 2, 3rd edn, and 3, 2nd edn, Berlin, 1960 and 1970.
Snell & Maehler	Snell, B. and Maehler, H., *Pindari carmina cum fragmentiis*, Leipzig, 1987–9.
SVF	von Arnim, H., ed., *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, Stuttgart, 1903–5, repr. 1978.
Syll.^{3}	*Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*, ed. W. Dittenberger, 3rd edn, ed. F. Hiller von Gaertringen et al., 4 vols, Leipzig, 1915–24.
TAM	*Tituli Asiae Minoris*, Vienna, 1901–89.
TGF (*vel* Nauck)	Nauck, A., ed., *Tragicorum graecorum fragmenta*, 2nd edn, Leipzig, 1889, repr. with suppl. by B. Snell, Hildesheim, 1964.
ThesCRA	*Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum: Lexikon antiker Kulte und Riten*, 5 vols, Los Angeles, 2004–6.
TrGF	Snell, B., Kannicht, R., and Radt, S. L., eds, *Tragicorum graecorum fragmenta*, Göttingen, 1971–.
Welles	Welles, C. B., *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period*, New Haven, 1934.
West (*vel GEF*)	West, M. L., ed., *Greek Epic Fragments*, Cambridge, MA, 2003.

A note on transliteration

My approach to transliterating Greek names is rather eclectic. As a rule of thumb, for the better known names I usually employ the Latinized form: e.g. Peisistratus instead of Peisistratos and Eumaeus instead of Eumaios, Cyrene instead of Kyrene, Asclepius instead of Asklepios, and so on. For the less quoted names or for the ones whose Latinized version I find too challenging or somewhat confusing, I use the Greek form. For example, Phytalos not Phytalus; Herakles Alexikakos not Hercules Alexicacus; and Dike not Dice.

Introduction

Epiphany is of cardinal significance for both ancient and modern religious systems.[1] On the one hand, it provides important information on the nature and the form of the deities and their relationship to certain individuals and their respective communities; while on the other hand, it informs us of the individuals' hopes and expectations in regard to their revered deities. More significantly, epiphany is often revealing of the wider sociopolitical dynamics of the community, within which these individuals operate.[2] It is no coincidence that from the third century BC onwards many local historians, who were interested in the celebration of the local social, political, and religious physiognomy of certain communities, took the epiphanies of local deities as their subject matter: Istros the Callimacheian wrote two treatises on the epiphanies of Apollo (*Ἀπόλλωνος Ἐπιφανείαι*) and Herakles (*Ἡρακλέους Ἐπιφάνειαι*), and Phylarchos on Zeus' epiphany (*Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Διὸς ἐπιφανείας*); Syriskos of the Pontic Chersonesos wrote about the epiphanies of the local poliadic deity Parthenos (*Συρίσκος Ἡρακλείδα τὰ[ς] | [ἐπιφαν]είας τᾶς Παρθένου φιλ[ο]- |[πόνως] γράψας*), and Timachidas of Rhodes wrote on the epiphanies of Athena Lindia (*καὶ τᾶς ἐπιφανείας | [τ]ᾶς θε<ο>ῦ ποιούμενοι τὰν ἀ[ναγραφὰν παρεόντος*). Finally, the second-century sophist Claudius Aelianus wrote a general treatise *Περὶ θείων ἐναργειῶν* (*On Divine Epiphanies*).[3]

Following in the footsteps of these ancient historians of epiphany, this book argues that epiphanies do not only reveal what the Greeks thought about their gods. The advent of the god into the mortal sphere tells us just as much about the preoccupations and the assumptions of the culture involved.[4] The present book is a study of both the Greek deities who were prone to epiphany and the cultural

[1] On the significance of modern epiphanies, such as the Marian epiphanies of Lourdes, Fátima, and Medjugorje, see chapter 8.

[2] Cf. Vermeulen (1964, 9).

[3] Istros: *FGrHist* 334 F 50–3; Phylarchos: *FGrHist* 81 T1; Syriskos: *IosPE I²* 344, 3–5; Timachidas: *Syll.*³ 725, 7–8; Claudius Aelianus: see *NP* s.v. Claudius. Cf. also Graf (2004, 114) and Bowie and Strehl (1996, 327–8). The list presented here is not all-inclusive. For other historians that wrote on the epiphanies of deities with local attachments like Leon of Samos (*FGrHist* 540 T1) or Aristotheos of Troizen (*FGrHist* 835 T1), see Chaniotis (1988, 53–4, 308ff.), both dated *circa* the middle of the 2nd cent. BC. Lists of the epiphanies of the local deity is a recurrent feature in Hellenistic temple chronicles. See the discussion in chapter 8, 'The city and the temple as recipients of epiphanies').

[4] By culture, I mean here 'a set of publicly shared codes or repertoires, building blocks that structure people's ability to think and to share ideas'. I have borrowed this definition from Eliasoph and Lichterman (2003, 735), where the reader can find more bibliography on the historical development of 'culture' and previous sociological perspectives.

specificity of the very notion of epiphany. More significantly, this is a book about how integral the study of divine epiphany and its sociopolitical functions is for the study of Greek religion and culture. Re-establishing epiphany as a crucial mode in Greek religious thought and practice, underlining its centrality in Greek cultural production, and foregrounding its impact in both perpetuating pre-existing power structures and constructing new ones are the three main aims of this study.[5]

WHAT IS AN EPIPHANY?

Before examining any further the constituent parts of epiphany, its challenges, and its functions, we need to establish a working definition of the term.[6] Epiphany denotes the manifestation of a deity to an individual or a group of people, in sleep or in waking reality, in a crisis or cult context. The deity (of Panhellenic or local stature) may appear in an anthropomorphic, enacted, *effigies*, *pars pro toto*, or zoomorphic form; it may also appear as a *φάσμα* or in the form of unexpected and extreme natural disasters (amorphous). The perception of the deity's epiphany may be sensorial (i.e. the perceiver may see, hear, feel, or even smell the deity) or intellectual (i.e. the perceiver may be aware of the deity's presence without seeing or hearing, etc. anything).[7] Witnesses to epiphany might be humans, animals, other gods, or even the natural world as a whole.[8] This definition, which will be tested against a wide range of narratives that come from diverse chronological and generic backgrounds, is the first step towards the formation of a functional conceptual framework that treats Greek epiphany not as a literary construct but as a culturally structured and culturally meaningful phenomenon.[9]

[5] On epiphany as a fundamental concept ('Zentralbegriff') in Greek and Roman religious thought and practice, see Pfister (1924, 281). On epiphany as an important model of 'cultural encoding of the world', see Graf (2004, 123–4). Other scholars like Bierl (2004, 43), on the other hand, suggested caution and argued against the idea that epiphany is a central concept for the history of religions.

[6] Other more restrictive definitions in Nilsson (1961, 225); Otto (1956, 25); Graf (1997, 1151). The definition found in Pax (1955, 20), on the other hand, appears to be less restrictive (see next section, '*Status quaestionis*: a brief history of epiphany'), but it is difficult to see how so much emphasis on the suddenness and the momentary character of the mortal–immortal communication can accommodate ritualized epiphanies that take place, let us say, in a festival context.

[7] Versnel (1987, 53). Cf. also Artem. *Oneir*. 2.34: *Τῶν θεῶν οἱ μέν εἰσι νοητοὶ οἱ δὲ αἰσθητοί· νοητοὶ μὲν οἱ πλείους, αἰσθητοὶ δὲ ὀλίγοι*.

[8] E.g. Aphrodite's epiphany (*Hymn Hom. Ven*. 69ff.) is perceived by animals; the earth and the sea perceive Phoebus' epiphany (Thgn. *El*. 1.5–10); the earth and Leto and Eileithyia perceive Apollo's birth epiphany (*Hymn Hom. Ap*. 118ff.); the assembly of the immortal gods perceive Apollo's epiphany (*Hymn Hom. Ap*. 2ff.). The perceivers exhibit reactions comparable to those of humans: the animals rejoice at Aphrodite's epiphany; Delos and the two goddesses are overwhelmed with joy when Apollo is born, and raise a ritual cry; and the immortal gods are terrified at the sight of Apollo entering Olympus. Seaford (2006, ch. 4) suggests that in extreme cases, such is the epiphany of Dionysus both in cult and crisis, even inanimate nature can be thought of as witnessing the god's epiphany: Pentheus' *oikos* trembles with Bacchic frenzy and is described as collapsing in a way that seems comparable to that of the worshippers of Dionysus. An epiphany could be witnessed by an individual or a group of worshippers.

[9] For an analogous conceptual framework, this time related to oracles and oracular culture in ancient Greece, see Kindt (forthcoming).

The Greek verb *φαίνω* 'to show, to make visible, bring to light, make known' [med. and act. intr. 'to become visible, come to light, appear'] derives from the root **φā* (Indo-European **b^{h}eh$_2$-*/PIE root **b^{h}h$_2$-*) 'to shine', 'to radiate', 'to startle', 'to sparkle', 'to glow'—also apparent in *φανερός*, *φῶς*, *φημί*, *φάσις*, *φάσμα*, *ἱεροφάντης*, as well as in the Latin *fāri* and many light- or shine-related Sanskrit words like *bhāta* 'to shine', 'sparkle'; *bhānuh* 'light', 'beam', 'ray'; and *bhanam* 'vision', 'manifestation', 'apparition'.[10] Light, then, is not only a conspicuous *semeion* of divine presence as mentioned above; it is inextricably intertwined with divine epiphany; it lies at the very heart of the notion.

The noun *ἐπιφάνεια*, in the sense of 'divine manifestation', is first recorded in the so-called Delphic *Soteria* (dated to 279/8 BC, where it describes Apollo's epiphany in the battle against the Gauls),[11] but the related adjective, participle, and infinitive of (*ἐπι*/*ἐν*)-*φαίνειν* appear already in Homer and Hesiod—both prefixes convey the notion of something hidden within becoming apparent, coming up to the surface, being made visible.[12] Albert Henrich's entry on epiphany in the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*—retained with small changes and further bibliographical additions in the fourth edition—is somewhat unclear: 'The concept is much older than the term (Hdt. 3.27.3; *SIG*^{3} 398.17, 278 BC).' The problem is that—as with many other concepts—many different Greek terms are used to refer to the same concept. The noun *ἐπιφάνεια* is not the only one. We must not allow ourselves to be unduly influenced by the one word, which having passed into English, French, German, and other European languages seems to us the most important designation.

In fact, most of the time, the deity is simply described as 'appearing' or 'appearing clearly' (e.g. *ἐναργέες ἄντ' ἐφάνησαν*;[13] *θεοὶ φαίνονται ἐναργεῖς*;[14] *ἐπιφανῆναι*, *ἐπιφανεῖσαν*;[15] *φαανθείς*[16]), as 'seen by' (e.g. *ὤφθη*),[17] as 'coming' (e.g. *προσέρχεται*;[18] *ἦλθε*;[19] *βῆ*[20]), 'meeting' (e.g. *συνήντετο*;[21] *ἐκίχανε*[22]), or as 'standing in front of' a perceiver (e.g. *στῆ δ' αὐτοῦ προπάροιθε*[23]), etc. From the Hellenistic era onwards the terms *ἐπιφάνεια*, *δύναμις*, *ἀρετή*, *ἐνάργεια*, *ἐνέργεια*, *παρουσία*, *ἐπιδημία*, and *ἐπίστασις* appear in different situational contexts to denote the manifestation of a deity: e.g. *ἐπιδημία* denotes both the presence of the god in a moment of crisis and the deity's seasonal return to his or her temple or shrine in a cult context; *ὄψις*, *ὄνειρος*, *ὄνειρον*, *ὀνείρατον*, *ἐπίστασις*, and *ἐπίσταμαι* usually denote an epiphany that takes place in a dream; the terms *ἄνοδος*, *κάθοδος*, *ἀναγωγή*, *καταγωγή*, *κατάπλους*, *εἰσαγωγή*, *ἀναγώγια*, *καταγώγια*, *ἀνάγω*, and *κατάγω*, on the other hand, often denote the advent of

[10] Beekes, R. (2010), *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, Leiden, vol. 2, s.v. *φαίνω*, *-ομαι*. Cf. also Chantraine, P. (1974), *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: Histoire des mots*, vol. 3, Paris, s.v. *φαίνω*.

[11] *Syll.*^{3} 398. The inscription is discussed in chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies'. Cf. also Pfister (1924, 78). On the semantic development of the *ἐπιφάνεια* word, see Pax (1955, 1–20) and Vermeulen (1964, 9ff.).

[12] E.g. *Il.* 1.198; *Od.* 16.159; Hes. *Cat.* Fr. 165 M-W.

[13] Hes. *Cat.* fr. 165.5 M-W.

[14] *Od.* 7.201.

[15] Hdt. 6.61.

[16] Mosch. 2.89.

[17] Sosib. *FGrHist* 595 F25. Vermeulen (1964, 10) rightly draws attention to vision as the predominant sense in Greek epiphany, as opposed to hearing in Hebrew epiphany. On the fundamental differences between Greek and Judaeo-Christian epiphany, see Kyrtatas (2004) and Mitchell (2004).

[18] Ar. *Av.* 1709.

[19] *Od.* 16.155ff.

[20] *Il.* 4.74.

[21] *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 399.

[22] *Il.* 3.383.

[23] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 81.

a deity controlled by means of ritual performance, and are often attested in a festival context; the terms *ἐπιδημία*, *ὑποδοχή*, *δέχομαι*, *εἰσαγωγή*, *δεξιοῦμαι*, *δεξίων*, etc. are most commonly found in a theoxenic context; whilst the terms *κίνδυνος*, *κινδυνεύω*, *βοήθεια*, *σωτηρία*, *σωτήρ*, and *σώτειρα* are more commonly to be found in reference to epiphanies in warfare, etc. To avoid repetition, I have included a separate section on terminology in each of the chapters and subsections, where appropriate.

Nevertheless, as the last section of this chapter makes clear, the Greeks were interested not only in a deity's appearance; some of the most fascinating epiphanic narratives (both in crisis and cult context) involve the disappearance of a deity. Noteworthy examples include Athena's disappearance in the form of her sacred snake on the eve of the Persian invasion; Herakles' manifestation as concluded from the disappearance of his sacred weapons at the battle of Leuctra; and the disappearance of Kore, the maiden goddess, which lies at the heart of so many festivals all over the Greek-speaking world.[24] The adjective and the participle of *ἀφανίζομαι* and the noun *ἀφάνεια* (and more rarely *ἀφάνισις*) are attested in Classical times with a semantic breadth that ranges from 'disappearance' and 'utter destruction' to 'death'.[25] Hellanicus and Herodotus use the terms to refer to the appearances and the disappearances of Zalmoxis and Aristeas respectively, the emphasis being on the ambiguous nature of the disappearance of these men that coincided with their acquiring immortality and cultic honours in their respective communities and, thus, becoming venerable deities.[26] In fact, the sudden, unexplained disappearance of a person is often perceived as conclusive evidence for his or her entrance into the sphere of immortality.[27] As a whole, *ἀφανίζεσθαι* and its cognates from the fifth century onwards are used to describe a change of status, i.e. a passage from visibility to invisibility, which, as expected, may carry allusions to passing from life to death. Such was the case with Zalmoxis who disappeared in a cave, was thought of as dead, and received cult status on his return;[28] and with Iphigenia, whose disappearance from the sacrificial altar (again she is not dead but transferred to a barbaric land) was followed by her acquiring of cultic honours;[29] and finally, such was the case with Io's seizure by Zeus, which bears close similarities to the abduction of Kore by Pluto.[30] The term *aphaneia* shall be used henceforth to denote the contrary counterpart of *epiphaneia*.

[24] Diod. Sic. 15.53.4: *τὰ κατὰ τὸν νεὼν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ὅπλα παραδόξως ἀφανῆ γέγονε*; Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.7: *ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Ἡρακλείου καὶ τὰ ὅπλα ἔφασαν ἀφανῆ εἶναι*; Plut. *Them.* 10.1–3: *σημεῖον μὲν λαμβάνων τὸ τοῦ δράκοντος, ὃς ἀφανὴς ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκ τοῦ σηκοῦ δοκεῖ γενέσθαι*; Hdt. 4.13–15: *μετὰ τὴν ἀφάνισιν τὴν δευτέρην Ἀριστέω . . . καὶ τὸν μὲν εἰπόντα ταῦτα ἀφανισθῆναι.*

[25] E.g. Aesch. *Ag.* 384.

[26] Hellanicus, *FGrHist* 1 Fr. 73 and Hdt. 4.15. On Aristeas' and Zalmoxis' epiphanies and *aphaneiae*, see chapter 8, 'The individual as recipient of epiphanies'.

[27] Cf. Paus. 1.32.5; Plut. *Rom.* 29.12; *Brut.* 36.7–17.1; and *Is. et Os.* 366 d, where *ἀφανισθῆναι* is used for Osiris.

[28] As quoted above.

[29] Arist. *Poet.* 1455b.2.

[30] Diod. Sic. 5.60.4–5. In all three cases, a search party (the Getae search for Zalmoxis; Orestes for Iphigeneia; Kyrnos for Io) follows the footprints of the person vanished.

STATUS QUAESTIONIS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF EPIPHANY

The etymological origins and semantic development of *ἐπιφάνεια* and its cognates have been meticulously investigated and discussed by Elpidius Pax, who produced a voluminous study on the topic in 1955.[31] Pax defines epiphany as a sudden intrusion of a deity into the human world, which is brought about unexpectedly before man's eyes, either with or without a specific visible or audible form, with either a familiar or an unfamiliar character, and which is withdrawn just as quickly as it came.[32] As in my definition, for Pax, the deity's appearance may take place in a dream or a waking reality—after all, the borderline between dream visions and waking visions is not to be drawn easily—in a crisis, or a cult context. However, Pax adds that the cultic epiphanies may last longer than the crisis ones, which, in his view, are usually of limited duration.[33] He also identifies eight forms in which the concept of epiphany could appear: 1) the unexpected bodily appearance of a deity to an individual (such were the epiphanies of Asclepius and the Dioscuri);[34] 2) the dynamic intervention of a deity in a moment of crisis (mostly epiphanies attested by epigraphic material such as those of Artemis Leukophryene in Magnesia, or Zeus Tropaios in Pergamon);[35] 3) the manifestation of power of a deity's 'Krafttat', equivalent to the Greek *dynamis*;[36] 4) the periodic return of a deity to its cultic centre, which is denoted by the term *epidemia*;[37] 5) the *parousia*, that is the manifestation of a ruler in a ruler cult context;[38] 6) the first appearance of a deity which in some cases coincides with the deity's birth;[39] 7) the dream vision, namely epiphany of a deity in a dream, a notion often but not exclusively denoted by the Greek term *epistasis*;[40] and finally in late antiquity 8) the theurgist's vision acquired through a state of ecstasy.[41]

As a whole, Pax makes use of a wide definition of epiphany. His descriptive approach is generally fair to its primary material—with the exception perhaps of the claimed limited duration of crisis epiphanies, which is not sufficiently justified. His analysis, on the other hand, conflates his own modes of thought and categories with the primary material, and, thus, appears somewhat programmatic. This is especially true when he distinguishes between religious epiphanies, that is epiphanies which reflect cultic realities, and 'degenerated' ones ('Entartungen'), a category to which what he calls 'Imperial', 'legendary', 'literary', 'parodying', 'miracle', and, finally, 'superstitious' epiphanies belong.

More importantly, Pax does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of epiphany in the Graeco-Roman world—his focus being the cultic connotations and origins of *epiphaneia* in the Judeo-Christian epiphany of the Old and New

[31] Pax (1955, 1–20). The same views are also found in Pax (1962, 832–909) and (1970, 224–7).
[32] Pax (1955, 20). [33] Pax (1962, 832).
[34] Plut. *Mor.* 1103b; Dion. Hal. 6.13; Polyaen. 2.31.4.
[35] Ditt. *Syll.* 398.16; *Inschr. v. Pergamon* 1160, and many others, on which see chapter 8, 'The city and the temple as recipients of epiphanies'.
[36] Dion. Hal. 2.68; Diod. Sic. 5.49.
[37] Diod. Sic. 2.47 (Apollo's *epidemia*); 4.3.2 (Dionysus' *epidemia*).
[38] E.g. *I.Cos* 391 (Caligula). [39] E.g. Diod. 1.32.5 (Osiris).
[40] Plut. *Them.* 30 (Mother Dindymene); Plut. *Cam.* 16 (Asclepius).
[41] E.g. Marinus *vita Procli* 7.30; Procl. *Crat.* 122, etc.

Testament. In particular, he argues that as a central theme of biblical theology *epiphaneia* shows only occasional and superficial points of contact with analogous pagan ideas. Pax's greatest strength lies in the emphasis he places on the cultic context in which epiphanies take place, and in recognizing along with Pfister that 'epiphany' is a central concept in the study of the history of religions in general and the study of Greek religion in particular.[42] Nonetheless, Pax casts his net somewhat too widely and discusses epiphany in the Graeco-Roman world, the Indo-Iranian cult systems, Egypt, Babylonia, and the Judeo-Christian world of the Bible. His discussion of Graeco-Roman epiphany occupies, as expected, only a small part of the whole project and aims at supporting his assertion that ἐπιφάνεια was originally a word of cult language. This is a highly problematic view, since the term does not appear to denote the divine manifestation of a deity until the Hellenistic period.[43]

In Pax's work the concept of 'epiphany' is considered to be a direct inference from *epiphaneia*. This simple equation between epiphany and *epiphaneia* has been challenged by Dieter Lührmann, who claims that *epiphaneia* essentially signifies 'the helpful intervention of the gods' for the benefit of their worshippers, initially in a military context, but later also in a wider spectrum of contexts.[44] Hence, in Hellenistic Judaism, *epiphaneia* is the historical intervention of Yahweh, the only God of the Old Testament, for the benefit of his people. Lührmann dismisses Pax's idea that the conceptual and material content of the Greek *epiphaneia* corresponds to the Judeo-Christian *epiphaneia*.[45] More importantly, Lührmann's view that *epiphaneia* never appears in the sense of visible bodily manifestation of a deity, and that it *only* denotes a manifestation of power, especially in a warfare context, as a synonym to σωτηρία and βοή(α)θεια, is not supported by our sources, as Henk Versnel has shown.[46] Nevertheless, as mentioned before, *epiphaneia* is only one term denoting the divine manifestation of a deity.

It should be obvious by now that both Lührmann and Pax were interested in Graeco-Roman 'epiphany' only insofar as the study of that concept and terminology could enhance their understanding of the use of the term *epiphaneia* in biblical texts. Both scholars were heavily dependent on Friedrich Pfister's 1924 collection of primary material, which remains, even today, the most widely received scholarly work on the subject.[47] Pfister took epiphany to be the

[42] For instance, Pfister (1924, 287) and Pax (1955, 10). On the centrality of epiphany in Graeco-Roman religion see also Nilsson (1950, 100) and Vermeulen (1964, 9), among others. Contra: Cancik (1990, 290) and Bierl (2004, 43, n. 42).

[43] Cf. also Pax (1962) and Nock (1957, 230).

[44] Lührmann (1971, 188ff.). Cf. also Versnel (1987).

[45] Lührmann (1971, 199) and Lau (1996, 181).

[46] Versnel (1987). Cf. also *FGrHist* 334, fr. 50–3; *FGrHist* 532 im Kommentar 445 Anm. 19. Jacoby, nevertheless, denies Herzog (1931, 49) the right to extent the definition of epiphany to cover Asclepius' therapeutic epiphanies.

[47] Pfister (1924, 277–323). We are just beginning to understand the prominent role that the scientific study of religions played in Third Reich Germany, on which see, for instance, Flasche (1994) and (1996). Friedrich Pfister, who wrote this authoritative lemma on *Epiphanie* in the Supplement of *RE*, was from 1933 the co-editor (along with Otto Weinreich) of the *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, the journal that during the reign of the National Socialist party gave voice to the preoccupations of contemporary historians of religion, philologists, and Germanists with the religion

appearance of a supernatural being (god, hero, spirit, ghost) in front of the eyes of an individual or a group of individuals.[48] More specifically, epiphany denotes: a) the personal concrete appearance of a supernatural being to a mortal, b) the dream vision ('Traumerscheinung'), and c) the divine intervention of a deity in general ('Offenbarung'), which does not necessarily presuppose corporeal manifestation. He distinguishes between epic, mythic, legendary, cultic, and Christian epiphanies. Extra emphasis is placed on epiphanies and their importance in shaping the Hellenistic and early Imperial ruler cult.[49] Pfister's definition and classification, which agrees for the most part with that of Nilsson, influenced and shaped to a greater or lesser degree the description and analysis of epiphany in the works of Jan Bremmer, Richard Buxton, Walter Burkert, Fritz Graf, Albert Henrichs, Richard Seaford, Henk Versnel, and many others historians of Greek religion.[50]

Much of the work on divine epiphany produced by these scholars was devoted to Dionysus as the epiphanic deity par excellence.[51] It was French structuralism, with its emphasis on binaries and structural opposites, and its warm reception by Anglo-Saxon, Dutch, and German historians of religion—that focused on Dionysus as the archetypical epiphanic deity.[52] Scholarly works such as those of Jean Pierre Vernant, Marcel Detienne, and Reneé Koch-Piettre brought the bodily physiognomy of the gods and their qualities into the foreground.[53] Narratives that include anthropomorphic manifestations of the gods, such as that of

and the faith of the Germanic peoples and their religious leader. 'Die Religion und der Glaube der germanischen Völker und ihrer religiösen Fürher' was the title of Pfister's first essay in the journal as its co-editor. Flasche (1996) claims that, although Pfister treats some of his prevailing and provocative political ideas of the time with caution, he does occasionally give in to the illusions of the political leadership of his time.

[48] Pfister (1924, 281).

[49] On epiphanies and ruler cult see, for instance, Nock (1930, 1–62) and Price (1984, 70–95) with bibliography.

[50] Nilsson (1951, 225): 'Die Erscheinung des Gottes im Tempelschlaf ist eine Epiphanie, ein Wort, das eine recht weite Bedeutung hat, körperliche Erscheinung eines Gottes, von der seltener berichtet wird, Erscheinung im Traum, oder ganz allgemein Offenbarung ohne eine persönliche Erscheinung'; cf. also Roussel (1931, 70–116); Burkert (1986), (1992, 533–51), and (1997a, 15–34). Cf. also Graf (1997, 1150); and Henrichs (1996, 546).

[51] See, for instance, Bremmer (1983), (1984); Buxton (1994), Burkert (1993); Graf (1984), (1993); Henrichs (1978), (1979), (1982), (1993); Seaford (1981), (1993), and (1997). On Dionysus as the epiphanic god par excellence, see also the introduction in Seaford's 1996 commentary to Euripides' *Bacchae*. Cf. also the essays collected by Renate Schlesier in a 2011 volume entitled *A Different God? Dionysus and Ancient Polytheism*. Graf (2010b) provides an excellent review of Dionysus and his treatment by modern scholarship.

[52] E.g.; Detienne (1986a, 13–14): 'le dieu le plus épidémique du panthéon . . . qui fait de la parousie un mode d'action privilégié. Dionysos est par excellence le dieu qui vient: il apparaît, il se manifeste, il vient se faire reconnaître. Épiphane, itinérant, Dionysos organisé l'espace en fonction de son activité déambulatoire . . . Il y a en Dionysos une pulsion 'épidémique'. Qui le met à aux épiphanies régulières, programmées et toujours aménagées dans l'ordre culturel des têtes officielles, et chacune en son temps.'

[53] See, for instance, Vernant (1986) 'Corps obscur, corps éclatant', which was translated by Ann Wilson (1989) as 'Mortals and Immortals: The Body of the Divine', in. M. Feher (ed.), *Fragment of a History of the Human Body*, 19–47; and substantially revised by Froma Zeitlin before forming the first chapter of *Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays by J. P. Vernant*, 27–49. Cf. also Koch-Piettre (1996), (1999), and (2002).

Aphrodite to Helen in book 3 of the *Iliad*,[54] were taken as *exempla* of a dynamic interplay between the bodies of the mortals and the immortals. This interplay is orchestrated not simply in terms of the 'similar' and 'same', but also in terms of the 'dissimilar' and the 'different' and, effectively, celebrates the human body at its best, that is before old age and death put their rightful claims to it. Both mortals and immortals may possess extraordinary qualities such as beauty, stature, fragrance, vigour, and radiance; but humans enjoy these features for only a limited period, whilst gods seem to enjoy them forever, being impervious to both death and old age.[55] Vernant goes so far as to speak of humans and gods possessing two different kinds of body: gods own what he describes as a 'super-body', whilst humans possess an inferior version of that body, which can be described as a 'sub-body'. In visual art, this dynamic interplay between the body of the man and the body of the god is reflected in our difficulty in distinguishing between young and beautiful men and women and the young and beautiful gods and goddesses except by depending wholly on their attributes.[56]

Nonetheless, long before the structuralists of the so-called Paris School (École de Paris), students of Greek religion like Walter Otto made epiphany in general, and Dionysus' epiphanic nature in particular, the focus of their scholarly work.[57] Dionysus became both the god of proximity and closeness to humanity and simultaneously the god of absolute remoteness. Under the influence of Schiller and Hölderlin, as well as Nietzsche's writings, on the one hand, and his study of Protestant theology on the other, Otto saw Dionysus and the Greek gods in general as the polar opposite of Christianity. For Otto, the Greek deities were not simply objects for observation by the antiquarian; they were living beings, whose epiphanies—he actually called them theophanies, drawing from his background as a theologian—were the most vivid expression of their beauty and vitality.[58]

Eric Robertson Dodds was also influenced by Nietzsche in his studies on Dionysiac mania.[59] Unlike Otto, he opted for a more scientific approach: in his

[54] On this narrative, see also chapter 1, 'Anthropomorphic epiphany'.

[55] Steiner (2001, 45–6).

[56] Cf. for instance Frontisi-Ducroux (1988, 27–40). For more information on the dangers entailed in this close and often problematic relationship between the self-image of the human viewer and the body image of the divinity viewed see Vernant (1991, 41ff.).

[57] Dionysus' epiphanic nature: Otto (1933); epiphany or rather theophany: Otto (1956). More on Otto and his scholarly influences, and Otto as a historian of Dionysus, in Henrichs (1984, 234–5). On Nietzsche as 'Otto's unacknowledged source of inspiration', see Henrichs (1984, 234). Otto's notion of divine epiphany as reflecting simultaneously proximity to and remoteness from the human race echoes Hölderlin's celebrated *Patmos-Hymne* (1802), whose initial couple of lines read: 'Nah ist / Und schwer zu fassen der Gott'.

[58] Otto did not simply read and write about the Greek deities and their manifestations, he almost claimed that he could re-experience it. Cf., for instance, Otto (1956, 5): 'Götter können nicht erfunden, oder erdacht oder vorgestellt, *sondern nur erfahren* werden'; emphasis is mine. More on Otto in Kerényi (1963, 144–54). On Otto and Kerényi and their unorthodox approach to the study of Greek religion, see Henrichs (2010).

[59] Though he does not explicitly state this in his writings, the young Eric read Nietzsche in his formative years and was heavily influenced by him. More on Dodds and his contribution in the study of Dionysiac studies in Henrichs (1984). On Nietzsche as a source of inspirations for Dodds's portrayal of Dionysus, see also Seaford (1996, 33).

study of Dionysus and his epiphany he introduced elements from the newly developed disciplines of socio-anthropology and ethnography, along with comparative material from his personal experience with contemporary spiritualists and well-known mediums. His Sather lectures, which were published two years later under the title *The Greeks and the Irrational*, became one of the most influential works of post-war Classical scholarship. The fourth chapter of that book, his discussion of dream patterns and oneiric epiphanies in Graeco-Roman antiquity, is still one of the most quoted discussions on the topic, almost sixty years after its original publication. Dream visions, a term that has traditionally been used to denote epiphanies which take place in the course of a dream, and for this reason are more susceptible to being dismissed as 'mythic' or 'legendary' accounts, and mere 'fantasies', primarily because of an unhelpful preoccupation with the veracity of these visions, on which see more in the following section. Nonetheless, Dodds's greatest contribution to the discussion of dream visions and epiphany in general lies in his open-mindedness and his avant-garde belief that dreams and all the major vision-related phenomena were heavily informed and shaped by the culturally constructed nature of visual experience.

Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, whose work has influenced the present study of epiphany, was one of the first cultural historians who understood the dangers of projecting culturally predetermined classificatory modes of thought onto the 'reading', as she calls the process, of the ancient material. Sourvinou-Inwood's work, emblematic of the so-called 'linguistic turn', was shaped by the psychology of perception, semiology, the theory of reception, social anthropology, and social history. In her pioneering study entitled *'Reading' Greek Culture: Texts and Images, Rituals and Myths* (1991), she laid out her methodological groundwork, which remained the same with slight alterations in the 1995 book, *'Reading' Greek Death: To the End of the Classical Period*.[60]

Sourvinou-Inwood repeatedly emphasized that the ancient author and artist and their audience share some common 'frames', as Umberto Eco called them, a common code of communication, not just in terms of language but also in terms of concepts. In her sensitive, well-informed, and perceptive analysis of the Classical world, Sourvinou-Inwood maintained that exercising severe self-criticism both in methodology of analysis and its application to the descriptive material is a scholar's only safeguard against approaching the descriptive material with one's own theological, ideological, and other extra-scientific positions and intentions. All the caveats set by Sourvinou-Inwood in her discussion of the culturally determined nature of epiphany dovetail with my views on the cultural specificity of ancient epiphanies: while the natural components of the epiphanic *semeia* are still recognizable (beauty, fragrance, stature, power, and extraordinary deeds), their cultural components are sadly lost forever and are only recoverable to a limited degree by the modern reader.

The culturally construed nature of viewing processes in general, and viewing the divine in particular, became once again a fashionable scholarly topic when the

[60] Psychology of perception (esp. Hebb and Gregory); semiology (esp. Barthes, Suleiman, Eco, and Elam); theory of reception (e.g. Jauss); social anthropology and social history (e.g. Gombrich and Douglas). More in Sourvinou-Inwood (1991, 1–23) and (1995, 1–9, 413–44). Cf. also (1990, 295–6).

so-called 'pictorial turn' was introduced in the study of the history of religions in Classical antiquity, an area of research that has been primarily dominated by the 'linguistic turn' (note here the prevailing metaphor of 'reading' the iconographical along with the textual evidence).[61] In an attempt to respond to the emphasis laid by our primary evidence on the notions of 'spectacle' and 'visual experience' in both epiphanic narratives and artefacts primarily found in *theoric* contexts, while simultaneously being aware of the problematics and dynamics of different models of spectatorship and visuality, scholars like Jas Elsner and Verity Platt, among others, propose the abandonment of unmediated and unqualified vision in favour of a 'culturally specific visuality' and 'culturally inflected visual practices'.[62]

Platt's 2011 monograph on both the conceptual and the representational issues surrounding epiphany in material and 'verbal artefacts', as she calls them, is the paradigmatic treatment of epiphany from the perspective of this 'pictorial turn'. Platt, however, is careful to treat visual and verbal representations of epiphany in their own terms, using the former to challenge cognitive predicaments set by the latter. Platt's monograph on epiphany was in fact a breath of fresh air in the study of the subject. In a handsome volume, which contained a great number of high-quality reproductions of 'epiphanically charged' statues and religious scenes, Platt discusses expertly the complexities of viewing the man-made artefacts and taking the viewer back to the 'unmediated epiphanic encounter'. Several insightful analyses of epiphanic narratives from the so-called second sophistic are also offered. Its greatest advantage is the fact that it forefronts epiphany as a cultural product with all its inherent 'enduring problems of cognition, interpretation and mediation'.

Platt's book, along with a number of doctoral theses and conferences on the topic, all testify to the popularity of epiphany as a scholarly theme from 2000 onwards.[63] The present study is representative of this zeitgeist, but hopes to move the debate one step further by underlining not only the cultural specificity of epiphany and its high impact on Greek cultural production, but also epiphany's wider sociopolitical repercussions: that is how both individuals and communities used the epiphanic schema to make claims on exclusive religious knowledge and practice, and thus challenge the monopolies of god-sanctioned power. In other words, this book looks closely at how epiphanies were implemented in reinforcing old power structures and creating new ones. Furthermore, one of the major aims

[61] On the 'pictorial turn' as opposed to the 'linguistic turn', see Mitchell (1987) and (1995); and Elsner (1998).

[62] Cf. for instance Elsner (1996), (2000), and (2007); Platt (2002a), (2002b), and (2011). More on the fundamental theoretical issues regarding the so-called pictorial turn in Jay's introductory chapter in Brennan and Jay (1996).

[63] Conferences: a) Deus Praesens: Divine Epiphanies from Archaic Greece to the Christian Era, University of Illinois in Chicago (USA), 5–6 April 2002; b) Theoi Epiphaneis: Confronting the Divine in the Graeco-Roman World, University of Exeter, 19–22 July 2004. The special volume of *Illinois Classical Studies* (vol. 29, 2004) published the proceedings of a conference co-organized by Dimitris Kyrtatas and Nanno Marinatos at the University of Illinois in Chicago. c) Epiphanies: A Conference and a Workshop on the Method and Study of Ancient Religions Organised in Honour of Prof. Robin Hägg, University of Crete, 1–4 July 2001; d) Encountering the Divine: Between Gods and Men in the Ancient World, University of Reading (UK), 1–2 September 2011. For an informative survey of the most important studies prior to 1987, see the 'Bibliographical Note' at the end of Versnel (1987) and Henrichs (2010, 33–5).

of this book is to highlight how essential epiphanies were as conceptual tools for underscoring the limitations of human nature and culture and the corresponding ability of the omnipotent divine beings to overcome them; and, finally, it discusses the major role epiphanies play in the formation of cultural and political identity for their respective recipient communities.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to treat the 'epiphanic schema' in Greek culture and its emplotment (see below) in narratives from both literature and inscriptions in a holistic way and explore aspects of the topic that have up to now been kept apart, such as the generic and sociopolitical contexts of epiphany. I use the term 'epiphanic schema' instead of epiphany to refer to what can be described as the molecular structure of epiphany as a phenomenon and a concept which penetrates Greek literature and culture not only on a linguistic level, but also on the level of generic categorization, religious practice and performance, artistic representation, and, more importantly, as a concept that had strong and undeniable sociopolitical ramifications.

The material discussed in this book comes from an extremely wide chronological span (roughly from the late seventh century BC to the end of the second century AD) and is drawn from a diverse generic background and range of media: from Archaic epos to Classical drama and from historiography and hymnography to the novel and the inscriptions of the late Hellenistic and early Imperial periods. The main reason I opted for this all-encompassing approach was to look afresh at epiphany not as a phenomenon limited to one specific author, literary genre, period, or even medium of transmission, but as a cultural phenomenon of trans-generic and trans-categorical character. What initially appeared as an overwhelmingly enormous and diverse collection of sources was brought together by the recurrence of the epiphanic schema and the realization that the integral elements of epiphany—its molecular structure, if you will—and its functions remain surprisingly similar despite the chronological and generic diversity of its sources. The ubiquitous presence of epiphany in Greek art, literature, and epigraphy is, I claim, a reflection of its centrality in the Greek cultural tradition. This connection, self-evident though it may sound, is only beginning to emerge as a theme in scholarly research.[64]

I have privileged a thematic categorization of epiphanic narratives over a generic one (as in Pfister and Pax), primarily because this study treats epiphanies as a cultural product and not as a literary construct.[65] The thematic division cuts through the whole corpus of Greek literature, from early epic, lyric poetry, tragedy, and comedy, to rhetoric, historiography, the novel, and beyond; and from inscriptions accompanying and identifying Archaic and Classical votive

[64] See the introductory sections in Petridou (2006) and Platt (2011).

[65] Pfister (1924) distinguishes between epic, mythic, legendary, cultic, and Christian epiphanies; while Pax (1955) distinguishes between *mythic*, *epic*, *cult*, and *soteriological* epiphanies.

offerings to Hellenistic and Imperial archives and inventory lists, which testify to the special theophilic status of certain temples and communities. For analogous reasons, I have also opted not to follow a chronological categorization like that of Platt.[66] While it is important to acknowledge the differences between epiphanic accounts gleaned from the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, and Imperial periods—as is often the case in the present study—much may be gained from exploring epiphanies as a cultural product, as a cultural topos, that extends from the Homeric poems to Lucian and beyond.

More to the point, I have refrained from adopting distinctions between what is traditionally referred to as myth and history. Like all Greek narratives about the past, narratives about divine epiphanies often combine discourses scholars consider mutually exclusive, e.g. mythical versus historical.[67] Some epiphanic accounts fall into mythic territory, while others may seem more or less historical to us. To work within a framework that distinguishes between myth and history and to label any of the epiphanic accounts as mythical or historical would be to miss the point.[68] For this same reason, I am not interested in the veracity or the historicity of the epiphanies themselves as much as in their 'emplotment', their verbal and ideological embedment in the narrative and the cultural assumptions that contribute to the representation of a narrative as 'mythical' or 'historical'.[69]

Having said that, for the purposes of this study it is important to recognize how culturally bound religious and perceptual experience really is. They are, in fact, as culturally specific as they are embedded in narratives. It is therefore essential to recognize that there is no such thing as universal perceptual experience. Studies in socio-anthropology have emphasized the arbitrary and conventional character of representational systems; that is the arbitrary and culturally conditioned way we interpret, construct, and reconstruct reality in narratives and in material objects.[70] This premise, although it is widely accepted today, has by no means been fully integrated and applied in earlier studies of epiphanies in Greek literature and culture—with the notable exception of Platt (2011), who rightly emphasizes the culturally bound nature of our scopic regimes, namely of the ways we look at representations of epiphany in literature and material culture. When examining sensitive areas such as mortal–immortal interaction and people's ways of conceptualizing this interaction and its embeddedness in social performance and the political arena, there is always the danger of confusing one's descriptive material with one's culturally predetermined categories and heuristic tools.

[66] Platt (2011) distinguishes between early (Archaic and Classical), Hellenistic, and Imperial epiphany.

[67] This analysis owes much to Dougherty's pertinent discussion of Greek colonial tales and the unhelpfulness of modern distinctions between myth, legend, folklore, and history. More on this topic in the introductory section of Dougherty (1993).

[68] In White's view, historical narratives are not very different from literary and poetic representations of events in terms of narrative strategies and figurative language. More on this topic in White (1973, 11).

[69] 'Emplotment' is a term I have borrowed from White (1973, 11). A good example of the methodological problems involved in making such distinctions is provided at the end of chapter 2, where the stratagematic epiphany of Phye/Athena to the Athenians is discussed.

[70] See, for instance, Saler (1994) and Rappaport (1999).

The culturally preconditioned nature of the modern analytical categories were, as seen above, repeatedly emphasized by the late Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. Sourvinou-Inwood cautioned us, the modern 'readers' of the ancient literary, epigraphic, and visual material, who do not share the same perceptual filters with the artist and the society that produced them, and made sense of them, against the effortless but scientifically unsubstantiated 'common sense empiricism'. 'It is a good strategy', she proposed, 'to focus on the reconstruction of the ways in which a text was made sense of by its contemporaries.'[71]

My analysis also lays extra emphasis on the culturally determined character of perception. It is extremely important, I think, to distinguish between what is diachronically valid and what is synchronically true, and to be constantly aware of the culturally predetermined nature of the modern classificatory modes of thought. I have, therefore, based my analysis on an operational definition of religion. I distinguish between the descriptive elements (often referred to as *emic* elements, that is the meanings and the connotations which the believers themselves attach to particular signifiers—e.g. words, cultural artefacts, specific modes of behaviour—that are significant and meaningful to the actors of the studied religious system) and the analytical elements (often referred to as *etic* elements) of my research. Essentially, I distinguish between the data from the religions under examination (i.e. the epiphanic narratives under discussion) and my own analytical categories, the latter being constantly corrected and modified by the former.[72] Within the same methodological framework, traditional problems related to divine epiphany, such as that of the historicity or the veracity of the narratives accounting for epiphanies, are deproblematized: an operational definition deals with religion 'as postulated communicative events within believed networks of relationships between believers and their non-verifiable/non-falsifiable being or addressable reality'.[73] Instead, in this book I have focused on issues that were more in line with what the Greeks themselves found important when thinking of and dealing with epiphanies.

Let us take for example Pan's epiphany to the runner Pheidippides as narrated in the sixth book of the *Histories*—perhaps the most quoted epiphanic narrative in Herodotus and certainly one of the most well-known epiphanies of the Classical world.[74] Prior to the battle of Marathon the Athenians sent Pheidippides to Sparta to ask for help.[75] On his way, near Mt Parthenion, the runner heard the god calling him by his name and rebuking the Athenians for not reciprocating the

[71] Sourvinou-Inwood (1995, 8). Although some features of her knowledgeable and insightful analysis of the Classical world (most notably the model of 'polis-religion') have recently been brought into question especially with regard to their applicability to later periods, none would argue against Sourvinou-Inwood's admirable persistence in exercising severe self-criticism both in the methodology of analysis and in its application to the descriptive material. On criticism of the 'polis-religion' model, see for instance Woolf (1997), Bremmer (2010), Kindt (2012, 32–5), and the ERC-funded research programme Lived Ancient Religion (Gelebte Antike Religion) at the Max-Weber Kolleg, University of Erfurt (Germany). One of the main incentives of this programme is to move beyond the categories of 'cults' and 'polis-religion' and towards a more individualized notion of religious ideas and practices. An overview of the scholarly reception of the 'polis-religion' concept with further bibliography can be found in Parker (2011, 58–9, esp. n. 57).

[72] More on operational definitions of religion in Platvoet (1991) and (1994).

[73] Platvoet (1994, 701). [74] Hdt. 6.105. [75] Hornblower (2001, 134).

favour they received from him on a number of occasions in the past. Nevertheless, the god declared that he was willing to help them once again. Did Pheidippides see Pan or did he simply hear his voice? The textual evidence is not decisive. The verb *περιπίπτειν* can either mean 'to fall around', 'to embrace somebody', denoting physical contact, or 'to encounter' in a metaphorical way. The fact that Pheidippides hears the god calling him nonetheless points to an auditory epiphany rather than a vision. Pausanias complicates the matter by reporting that Pheidippides both saw (*φανῆναι*) and heard (*εἰπεῖν*) the god.[76] And the problems do not stop here. If Pan was indeed seen by Pheidippides, what did he look like? Did the god appear in his hybrid half-human half-goat form, as seen, let us say, on the famous crater of the Pan Painter?[77] Or did he appear in his aniconic form (as a stele or crudely constructed ancient *xoanon*, like the ones seen in Psyttaleia by Pausanias)?[78] Is it possible to think with Robert Garland that Pan manifested his godhead in an *amorphous* way as *panikos*, as a panic attack that inflicted the Persian army?[79] This is, after all, what the Greeks meant by 'panic'. Is it possible to talk about not one epiphany, but two: one private experienced by the runner, and one public, as experienced by the Persians? Walter Forehand offered an alternative explanation and maintained that Pheidippides' visionary and auditory experience was simply the neurological effect of his prolonged running. This experience, he concluded, could be compared to what this strange sensation, usually referred to as 'runner's high', modern runners feel.[80] One epiphany, two interpretations, the former perhaps more in line with the phobic nature of Pan attested elsewhere.

But, more importantly, did Pan really manifest his godhead to the Athenian runner on Mt Parthenion, or was this alleged epiphany one of these 'fantasies' communities and/or individuals often fabricate to explain a military victory or justify a defeat? That the Athenians seem to have thought of these manifestations not as mere fantasies (and here lies the discrepancy between ancient and modern reception), but as an important part of their cultural tradition and identity, can be safely inferred from the fact they instituted a festival, sacrifices, and an athletic contest in honour of the god who granted them his epiphany; moreover, they chose to portray the other epiphanies that took place in Marathon on the wall of the famous Stoa Poikile. It was there that Pausanias saw the epiphanic figures of Echetlaeus, Marathon, Theseus, Athena, and Herakles depicted among historical

[76] Paus. 8.54.6. Cf. also Paus. 1.28.4. For other accounts of the same encounter see Nep. *Milt*. 4.3; Pliny *HN* 7.84; Plut. *Mor*. 862A, where the name of the runner is Eucles.

[77] Athenian red-figured bell crater (side B) now at the Museum of Fine Art (MFA 10, 185), Boston. Dated to *c*.470 BC and attributed to the Pan Painter by Beazley (*ARV*^{2} 550.1, 1659). An ithyphallic Pan is pursuing a young shepherd with amorous intentions. Side A depicts the death of Actaeon by Artemis, yet another erotic encounter between a man and a goddess. The god in his hybridic guise is beautifully juxtaposed with the ithyphallic herm standing right behind him. The same deity is depicted both in his iconic and semi-iconic form. On aniconism in Greek art, see Gaifmann (2012). On hybrids and their iconographical representations, see Aston (2011, 11–49). On Pan as a hybrid par excellence see *eadem* (2011, 109–19).

[78] Paus. 1.36.2: *ἄγαλμα δὲ ἐν τῇ νήσῳ σὺν τέχνῃ μέν ἐστιν οὐδέν, Πανὸς δὲ ὡς ἕκαστον ἔτυχε ξόανα πεποιημένα*. See also Borgeaud (1988, 59–60). On *xoana*, see Donohue (1988), Platt (2011, 92–100), and Gaifmann (2012, 77–130).

[79] Garland (1992, 51–4). Cf. also Bury and Meiggs (1975, 160).

[80] Forehand (1985, 1). More on Pan's epiphany to Pheidippides in chapter 8, 'Explanatory function: epiphanies and making sense of the world'.

persons, such as the Athenian commander-in-chief Callimachus and the general Miltiades.[81] The fierce fighting at Marathon in 490 BC continued to haunt the collective imagination of the people several centuries after it took place, as Pausanias' vivid description shows:

> Here every night one can hear horses whinnying and men fighting. It has never done any man good to be exposed to this manifest view (ἐς ἐναργῆ θέαν) intentionally, but if it happens unintentionally then the wrath of the divine beings will not follow him.[82] The people of Marathon worship those who died in the battle and they call them heroes; in addition they worship the hero Marathon, whom the deme gets its name from.[83]

The battleground of Marathon and the dead, who eventually acquired cultic status, became in popular imagination a recurrent epiphany, posing vision-related challenges similar to any other epiphanic manifestation.

Admittedly, there is great difficulty in reconciling epiphany as an external phenomenon constituted outside the realm of human practice (as it is understood by religious insiders) with recognition of the internal, socially constructed nature of the phenomenon (as it is understood by scholars). The negotiating process between preserving some sense of its authenticity, immediacy, and otherness within the ancient cultural context, while simultaneously examining and explaining scientifically the sociocultural trends that made it so important in religious, literary, artistic, and philosophical contexts, is neither brief nor effortless. This problematic reception of ancient epiphany is primarily due to what Jan Platvoet calls 'the twofold invisibility of religion'.[84] Religion as a social institution is a mental construct and therefore invisible for its greater part; simultaneously it is marked by a second level of invisibility, a meta- or intra-invisibility: the believers believe that they interact with 'beings that cannot be seen, or rather require the believer's eye to be "seen" . . . The interaction of the believers with them is, therefore, from the empirical point of view, a postulated one, the actual reality of which can neither be verified nor falsified.' In this view, the believers can have relationships of reciprocity with these beings, i.e. address their prayers to them, offer them gifts, and even perceive them in dreams, visions, and auditions, whose veracity and historicity, by definition, cannot be debated any further.[85] In the history of religions of ancient civilizations, there is no room for 'Sachkritik', for the objective analysis of the scientific data.[86] It is encouraging, however, that this

[81] Paus. 1.15.3. Theseus was portrayed as rising from the ground, performing an impressive *anodos*; according to another line of tradition the apparition of Theseus appeared not as coming from the ground, but as a *phasma* in full armour fighting against the Persians (Plut. *Thes*. 35.5). As for Herakles, we learn that as a reward for his contribution in Marathon he was honoured with a penteteric festival, the so-called Herakleia, and athletic games (*SEG* 34.1). Athena's depiction in the Stoa Poikile as one of the epiphanic figures of Marathon is more problematic. Save for Aristophanes, who reports an Athena-related avian manifestation of an owl before the battle, no other source mentions Athena's epiphanic involvement in the battle (Ar. *Vesp*. 1086).

[82] On *enargeia* and spectatorship in Greek historiography, see Walker (1993, 353–77). On *enargeia* and *enargēs* as epiphany-related technical terms, see Zanker (1981, 297–311), Koch-Piettre (1999, 11–21), Otto (2009), and Chaniotis (2013, 174–7) with further references to primary sources and secondary bibliography.

[83] Paus. 1.32.3–4.

[84] Platvoet (1991) and (1994).

[85] Cf. also Henrichs (2010, 35).

[86] If there was ever a real chance for this in other disciplines is also a matter of debate.

pedantic and at times dangerous preoccupation with the veracity of the epiphanies seems to have subsided significantly. As Fritz Graf puts it, to the Greek mind, epiphanies did take place. Gods would have been 'irrelevant if they could not manifest themselves to humans'.[87]

Having said that, epiphany in Greek culture was much more than a chapter in the endless debate about divine presence, divine omnipotence and omniscience, and the gods' philanthropic outlook. In fact, as I argue in this study (especially in chapter 8), epiphany went well beyond theorizing on the gods' existence and intentions;[88] it shaped the Greeks' understanding of their cultic universe, and the concomitant perceptual and cognitive challenges (see below). Divine epiphany was implemented in explaining away the paradoxical coexistence of incompatible facts that defined the very core of their human existence (explanatory function). When overcoming physical or cultural limitations, the Greeks felt a little closer to their gods and a little more godlike themselves. In that sense epiphany had a major impact on the formation of their cultural identity. Furthermore, epiphany provided a minority of privileged individuals with the essential god-sent prestige and validity to resolve certain crises (authorizing function) and subsequently it proved itself to be a useful heuristic tool to perpetuate or, alternatively, challenge the current sociopolitical formations and power structures. In that sense, epiphany nuanced the formation of basic societal values in the Greek-speaking communities and their respective socio-economic stratification. This is a running theme throughout this book, but comes more to the foreground in chapters 4, 5, 7, and 8, especially in the last section 'Elective affinities'.

The majority of epiphanic manifestations, however, functioned as crisis management tools. To return to Pheidippides' encounter with the phobic god discussed above, Pan's epiphany at that moment of extreme danger soothed the tension and the disappointment that the Spartan denial of immediate military alliance had created. Who needs mortal *summachoi* when they can enjoy a divine alliance?[89] Up until Marathon, simply gazing at the Persian military attire or even simply mentioning the name of the Persians was enough to shock and terrorize the Greek military ranks.[90] In this case, Pan's revelation and intervention successfully bridged the cognitive dissonance between what one would expect to have happened, and what had actually happened.[91] Pan's revealing himself and

[87] Graf (2004, 113).

[88] Cf., for instance, Platt (2011, 12), who lays much emphasis on epiphany providing 'cognitive reliability' in the Greek and Roman belief systems and practices.

[89] More on this in Garland (1992, 51–7). On the sociopolitical function of epiphanies, see chapter 8.

[90] Hdt. 6.112.

[91] In fact, as Borgeaud (1988, 88–129) has most convincingly shown, assuming that the phobic god had appeared and intervened in the course of a battle or a siege proved to be quite effective when it came to explaining many of the extraordinary events or experiences that were reported as having taken place in the Persian wars and beyond. Pan's presence, for instance, was presupposed in order to explain Polyzelus' continued fighting even after he was blinded by a gigantic *phasma* in the battle of Marathon (*Suda*, s.v. Hippias); the Persian massacre in Psyttaleia (Paus. 1 36.2; Aesch. *Pers*. 447ff.); the defeat of the panic-stricken besiegers of Thrasyboulos and his team (Diod. Sic. 14.32.1–3); and the slaughter of the attacking Gauls at Delphi (Paus. 10.23.1–9).

promising divine alliance on the battlefield was the reason why 'the vastly outnumbered Athenians' were not defeated by the 'the vastly superior Persians'.[92]

Whether we think of Pan's epiphany as a crisis management tool which soothed the tension and the anxiety caused by the lack of reliable military allies, or as the result of the peculiar neurophysiological state runners often find themselves in after prolonged exercise, it is imperative to remember that these are both modern interpretations of the event and that neither of them discredits Pheidippides' account or the cultural significance it bore for its contemporaries. For the Athenians themselves, Pan's epiphany to Pheidippides functioned mostly as an *aition*, an episode that heralded his ascendancy in the Athenian civic pantheon and cultic calendar: Pan's epiphany to the Athenian runner resulted in the institution of a new cult in honour of the god: both in Herodotus' and in Pausanias' account of the epiphany, the focus is on the Athenians' enriching their cultic life by introducing Pan's cult into the civic pantheon.[93] Of course, it is likely that Pan's cult was already known to the Athenian country-dwellers. Yet, it was Pan's epiphany in 490 and his promise of divine support prior to the battle of Marathon that opened the way for establishing the god's shrine on the sacred slope of the acropolis, the annual sacrificial offerings and the Paneia festival, as well as the annual torch race in his honour.[94] Above all, the Athenians felt this as sign of divine favouritism, a sign of *theophilia*.

Epiphanies as a sign of *theophilia* is only one of the aspects of what can be termed *synchronic semantics*, namely one of the complex nexus of meanings the contemporary communities and individuals applied to these divine manifestations. This topic, along with other ones the Greek themselves privileged as being more significant than others in thinking about epiphanies, guided me in choosing the thematic divisions of the book and the topics which receive extra emphasis and attention within the individual chapters and sections. Furthermore, I have tried to focus my discussion on aspects of epiphany that have remained relatively unexplored (such as the epistemological aspect of epiphanies, namely epiphanies as vehicles of previously non-existent and often dangerous knowledge; the political and sexual exploitation of the steadfast expectation of epiphanies in certain situational contexts; the sociopolitical ramifications of a sudden appearance or disappearance of a deity from the civic space of a community, and so on), rather than repeating previous discussions, and, of course, on aspects of epiphany that sustain my overall argument about the cultural implications of the epiphanic schema. Since my interests lie with the multitude of ways epiphany impacted on the cultural production of the Greek-speaking world rather than with the specific ramifications of the emplotment of the epiphanic schema in particular generic contexts, I have not devoted any particular part of this discussion (although there are frequent references to all those subjects) to epiphany in any specific literary genre (like epiphany in Archaic hymnography, Classical tragedy or comedy, or

[92] Garland (1992, 53).

[93] By 'new cult', one must not necessarily imply that the cult of a specific deity was previously, as a whole, unknown to the community. It is rather the introduction of the cult into the civic pantheon, cult calendar, and complex of religious artefacts that we should have in mind. More on this topic in chapter 6.

[94] Hdt. 6.105–6; Paus. 1.28.4; Paus. 8.54.6.

Hellenistic epigram, etc.), system of beliefs and practices (epiphany in magic or theurgy), or epiphany in conjunction with any specific medium (such as epiphany in Hellenistic inscriptions or papyri).

More significantly, this book contains a limited number of references to material representations of epiphany, which illustrate further my main argument about the prodigious impact epiphany had on Greek culture. Most of my references to material representations of epiphany are to be found in the 'Effigies epiphany' section of chapter 1, and even there, by rule of thumb, I have limited myself to descriptions of divine images or the so-called cult statues embedded and represented in narratives.[95] Although related to each other on a semiotic level, epiphanies in words are quite different to epiphanies in images. Conveniently enough, three important studies of the material representation of the divine body in its various forms (anthropomorphic, aniconic, and hybridic) have appeared in the last few years. To begin with, I refer the reader to Verity Platt's volume on the material representation of primarily (but not exclusively) anthropomorphic epiphany in Graeco-Roman art and literature, to Milette Gaifman's study of aniconic representations of the divine, and to Emma Aston's study of hybrids in Greek literature and art, which deals with cases where the divine manifested itself as an amalgam of both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic form.[96] To these Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis's volume on Asclepius and his epiphanic activity in the context of his healing cult in second-century Pergamon should also be added.

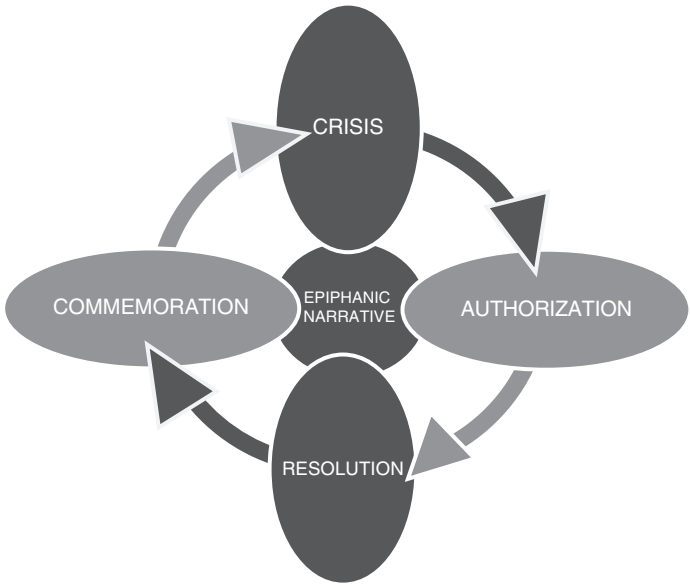
By contrast, this study focuses primarily on narratives (both literary and inscriptional) which in one or another way reflect one or more of the constituent elements of what I have referred to above as the epiphanic schema. The term 'schema' refers to a complex of analogous phenomena that go far beyond the field of language and linguistic communication and into the areas of sociopolitical structures, societal ideas, and interaction. Epiphanies are not restricted to literature, and thus cannot simply be treated as a literary construct. Epiphany is, rather, a trans-categorical element that permeates Greek language and art as much as it does Greek religiosity and culture. It is a central assumption of this book that the cultural pattern exerts more influence on the literary one than has hitherto been acknowledged.[97] Consequently, it is of vital importance to contextualize these epiphanic narratives, that is to place them in the appropriate sociopolitical and cultural context, so as to fully appreciate the centrality of the epiphanic schema in the sociopolitical nexus of the Greek-speaking world. The epiphanic schema can be very briefly described as follows: an epiphany motivated by a crisis may provide authorization to a human intermediary, or may lead straight to the resolution of the crisis without the authorization process being activated. The resolution of a crisis is more commonly than not followed by the introduction of some sort of commemorative structure, i.e. festival, statue, athletic contest, pilgrimage, etc.

[95] On the endless debate between the terms cult statue and divine image, see the pertinent analysis by Mylonopoulos (2010).

[96] Platt (2011), Gaifmann (2012), and Aston (2011).

[97] Having said that, this book is also concerned with how influential epiphanic narratives (e.g. the Iliadic battle epiphanies) have affected the ways the mortal–immortal interaction has been understood by the community. See more on this in chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies'.

Pan's epiphany, for example, provides a good illustration of this schema: the major political and military crisis the Athenians were faced with in 490 gave rise to the god's epiphany, which in turn authorized an intermediary—often a member of the local priesthood, a political and/or military leader, or other member of the socio-economic elite, in this case via the runner Pheidippides himself—with the power to take a specific course of action, in this case to suggest that divine alliance was to be expected in the course of the battle, which resolves the crisis. The resolution of the crisis is subsequently commemorated by the establishment of a new cult, a festival, athletic games, divine images, or/and some other conspicuous cultic feature (e.g. sacrifices, theoric journey) in honour of the deity that manifested itself. Thus, the original epiphany ends up operating as the *aition*, the reason behind the establishing of these cultic features.



Not all the narratives exhibit an uninterrupted sequence of all four elements (crisis, authorization, resolution, and finally commemoration). The focus depends heavily, among other factors, on the larger generic context of the narrative. Pausanias in his *Periegesis*, for instance, tends to look at the commemorative aspect of an epiphanic event and report the *aition*, i.e. the reason behind, the origins of this commemorative feature. Authors like Herodotus, Pausanias, Plutarch, Diodorus, and others, from whom the bulk of our narratives come, bear witness not so much to the epiphanies themselves, but rather to their cultic fossils, that is the festivals, the cultic statues, the processions, the sacrifices, the temples, and so on, which have been instigated by them. There is, of course, no way to know with absolute certainty whether it was the epiphanies which took place first while the ritual, temples, festivals, and the rest of the related cultic activities followed afterwards or it was the other way round—and here is by no means the right context to restate the question of whether myth or ritual came first. What really matters is that these stories about the epiphanies, embedded as they were in public consciousness, were at the back of the minds of the people who took part in

these festivals, viewed these cult statues, attended these sacrifices, or visited these sanctuaries; it was Pausanias' or Herodotus' informants themselves who thought of these epiphanies as the *aitia*, as heuristic tools for making sense of their indigenous cultic realities.[98]

The inability of this two-dimensional image to deliver the full complexity of a multidimensional cultural construct reflects the inadequacies of the modern classificatory modes in conveying the complexity of the application of the epiphanic schema in Greek literature and culture. These inadequacies, however, do not devalue the proposed analysis as a valid and effective tool of conceptualization, primarily because being aware of these limitations contributes to an *ad fontes* analysis of the individual integral elements of the schema and safeguards against anachronistic attributions and fallacious identifications of the primary material with the culturally specific tools of analysis.

THE BOOK AT A GLANCE

There is an implicit centripetal movement in the book: the first seven chapters discuss the pragmatics, the outer structure of epiphanies, focusing on the spatio-temporal contexts of epiphany and the forms the divine takes on to manifest its presence; while the last chapter examines the semantics of epiphany, what can be thought of as the inner structure of an epiphany, and its sociopolitical functions. Chapters 1 to 7 deal with questions of who, when, to whom, and how, whilst in the last of these I also address questions like why and who for. Chapter 8, entitled 'Synthesis', aims at bringing all the threads together. It is there that I look at the correlations of the different forms and contexts the Greek deities take and the contexts in which they manifest their godhead with the corresponding sociopolitical functions these epiphanies perform—thus forming a comprehensive conceptualizing tool that offers a better insight into the centrality, and the problematics, of the epiphanic schema. I distinguish between two very broadly defined spatio-temporal contexts, that of crisis and that of cult. This is a rather crude distinction and in adopting it I follow Pfister and the basic distinction he makes in his article in the *Real Encyclopaedie*. However, I do hope that the further division into chapters and sections along with the brief discussion on the fluidity of the boundaries between cult and crisis bring out the complexities and the fine nuances of epiphany and the inherent difficulties of applying such rudimentary categories to complex and polysemic cultural phenomena.

In particular, chapter 1 examines the various forms of divine epiphany, i.e. what the Greeks saw, heard, or even smelled, when they claimed they had an epiphany. Contrary to prevailing ideas about the predominance of anthropomorphism in representing the divine in Greek culture and religious ideas and practices, this chapter argues that Greek deities entertained a rich gamut of appearances and disguises in their interaction with the human terrain.

[98] On epiphany as an *aition* and festivals as commemorating divine manifestations, see chapter 8.

Sometimes, they acquired the bodily physiognomy of human beings (anthropomorphic). At other times, humans who enjoyed a special relationship with the divine assimilated themselves morphologically to their gods and were thought of as signifiers of the divine presence (enacted). Equally often, the gods denoted their presence in the shape of their statues (*effigies*), synecdochically through a symbol or a fraction of their divine substance or body (*pars pro toto*), or manifested themselves through a *phasma*, that is a spectral appearance that has a more ethereal bodily quality than, let us say, the presence of a deity in person. Finally, the Greek gods also manifested themselves in the shape of an animal (zoomorphic); or in no shape at all. Instead, they signified their divine presence and power through extraordinary actions and extreme natural phenomena and disasters (amorphous).

All these different forms of divine bodily physiognomy pose similar challenges for their perceivers, of which the most important is to penetrate the initial facade behind which the divine appears and recognize the divine within. There are rich rewards for those who do penetrate the form to reach the content and dire consequences for those who do not. Seeing or listening, however, is not enough; *idein* is not enough; the aim is always to comprehend and acknowledge (*gignōskein* or *noein*) the divine. The perceivers of the epiphany may be humans, animals, other gods, or even the natural world as a whole.[99] The most common hallmarks of divine presence, which are common to almost all the forms of epiphany, are: beauty, fragrance, stature, and light or radiance, to which power should be added. The usual reactions of the perceiver(s) range from surprise, awe, amazement, and joy to fear, utter despair, temporary or permanent paralysis of the sensory tools, mental and/or physical transformation, and even death.

At this point, it is important to emphasize that each of the forms discussed in chapter 1 can signify the divine presence equally effectively. The shape into which the divine chooses to manifest itself depends heavily on the spatio-temporal context of the epiphany (as discussed in chapter 2) and the identity of the perceiver, since a recognizable shape increases receivability (see the discussion of the notion of *functional metamorphosis* in chapter 1).[100] It is also worth reviewing briefly the correlations between the different forms and contexts of epiphany. Anthropomorphic epiphanies are to be found in all contexts discussed in chapter 2: battle, siege, stratagems, and disease, *in remotis*, sex, mystery cult, festival, and *theoxenia*. Anthropomorphism may have been a popular way of representing the divine but *it was by no means the only one*. For reasons I discuss in the relevant sections, *effigies* epiphanies were more popular in healing sanctuaries and festivals, while they featured to a lesser extent in the context of warfare. Enacted epiphanies were also very prominent in the festival context in

[99] E.g. Aphrodite's epiphany (*Hymn Hom. Ven.* 69ff.) is perceived by animals; the earth and the sea perceive Phoebus' epiphany (Thgn. *El.* 1.5–10); the earth and Leto and Eileithyia perceive Apollo's birth epiphany (*Hymn Hom. Ap.* 118ff.); the assembly of the immortal gods perceive Apollo's epiphany (*Hymn Hom. Ap.* 2ff.). The perceivers exhibit reactions comparable to those of humans: the animals rejoice at Aphrodite's epiphany; Delos and the two goddesses are overwhelmed with joy when Apollo is born, and raise a ritual cry; and the immortal gods are terrified at the sight of Apollo entering Olympus.

[100] The wider generic context of the narrative is also an important factor. See chapter 1, 'Anthropomorphic epiphany: exploring the tension between the human and the divine body'.

general and in the context of ceremonial procession in particular. *Phasma* epiphanies, on the other hand, prove to be extremely prolific in military, erotic, and mystic contexts. As far as this last context is concerned, it goes without saying that we can only speculate about the form of divine epiphanies that took place in the course of the initiatory process of the various mystery cults. Moreover, *pars pro toto* epiphanies—admittedly the most economic way to organize an epiphany—were very popular in a festival context (especially in festivals that celebrated the advent or the *xenismos* of a god), as well as in stratagems that took place on the battlefield. Metonymic epiphanies, a subcategory of *pars pro toto* epiphanies, were common in advent festivals, in mystery cults, and *in remotis*. Finally, as seen in the relevant section of chapter 1, amorphous epiphanies were perhaps thought of as the international or intercultural way of manifesting divine presence, and, therefore, were often employed in a siege context, when a deity has to deliver his/her message to two different groups who may not share the same cultural references.

In chapters 2 to 7 I discuss the contextual aspect of epiphany. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 deal with epiphanies taking place in warfare, illness, and in remote landscapes, while chapters 6 and 7 address issues related to epiphanies that take place in a cultic context, that is in mystery cults, festivals, and theoxenies. Chapter 5 is devoted to erotic epiphanies, namely to divine manifestations which occurred before, after, or during erotic encounters. It also looks at what I call 'sex stratagems', i.e. stratagematic epiphanies that did not involve immortals, but mortals disguised as gods, and which served as schemes to guarantee immediate sexual gratification for certain individuals. Chapter 5 is sandwiched between what can be roughly termed crisis and cultic epiphanies precisely because it oscillates between the two. Finally, chapter 8 pulls the individual threads of the investigation together and shifts the focus onto the functions of the epiphanic schema in Greek culture. In particular, epiphanies are examined as crisis-management tools, as explanatory tools, and, finally, as authoritative tools.

When the Greek deities did not manifest themselves voluntarily, stratagematic epiphanies (or else epiphanic stratagems) were employed by religious or political authorities to deal with a critical situation (chapter 2). In a disease context, epiphanies were employed as diagnostic or therapeutic tools (chapter 3), while *in remotis* epiphanies endowed prophets and poets with the power to see and celebrate the divine (chapter 4). Both erotic and *in remotis* epiphanies take place in marginal landscapes (meadows, caves, rivers, springs, mountains, etc.) that the Greeks called *eschatiai*. The *eschatiai* are also the spatial context of mystic epiphanies, that is epiphanies that take place in the course of an initiatory process in a mystery cult. Sleep and dreams become an important medium of mortal–immortal interaction in healing, erotic, and *in remotis* contexts. They guarantee privacy and one-to-one interaction.

Epiphanic festivals commemorate and celebrate a divine manifestation that took place in the past, while simultaneously securing divine alliance and protection for the times to come (chapter 6). Because contact with the divine could be an ambiguous and potentially dangerous process when unexpected and unprepared, epiphanic festivals also represent an attempt on behalf of the human worshippers to control and regulate the divine visitations via means of ritual performance. Erotic epiphanies and epiphanies in an advent or theoxenic context (chapter 7) offer safe and culturally conditioned schemata of interaction between mortals and

immortals, that is schemata that are to an extent based on the human customs and institutions, e.g. gods as progenitors (erotic epiphanies) and strangers entertained by humans (*theoxenia*). Boundaries may be crossed temporarily but the permanent world order is not endangered.

As a final point, chapter 8 looks at the functional aspect of epiphany. Epiphanies that take place at a critical moment often provide their perceivers with a rather effective tool to deal with the crisis (crisis management function); while other epiphanies elucidate the paradoxical coexistence of *prima facie* incompatible events or experiences and provide these events or experiences with a culturally meaningful cause–effect relationship (explanatory function). Epiphanies may even be implemented to support an individual's or a community's claims on divine favouritism or knowledge of the divine will, and to provide their perceivers with authorization to proceed with certain courses of action (authoritative function). Epiphanies offer knowledge and power, thus reinforcing old power structures or creating new ones. The aforementioned functional categories, conceptually distinct though they may be, often feature jointly in the same narrative. In fact, it may be more useful to start thinking of them not as different functions, but rather as different dimensions of the epiphanic schema (as seen above) and its reflections in Greek literature and culture.

THE GOD WITHIN: DIVINE PRESENCE AND ABSENCE

Divine epiphanies take place in the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, and, above all, in the minds of their witnesses.[101] However, the question remains: how does one know that one is confronted with an immortal? Epiphanies pose both sensorial and intellectual challenges that rise above the human capacity for perception and analysis.[102] Divine presence is normally deduced from certain signs, *σημεῖα*, which commonly accompany it, such as physical beauty, extraordinary stature, radiance, fragrance, exceptionally bright light, and above all, the power to perform and achieve beyond human measures.[103] Whatever humans can do, gods can do better; and things a human cannot do at all—the Greeks would call it an *ἀδύνατον*—are effortlessly achieved by a god.[104] Consequently, it is only to be expected that whenever somebody succeeded in something that was generally

[101] The next chapters look at an array of visual and auditory epiphanies. When thinking of olfactory ones, the famous sneeze epiphany from Xenophon's *Anabasis* (3.2.9) comes first to mind.

[102] The reader might think here of Protagoras (D-K 80 B 4), who famously summarized the problems of human sensorial and intellectual perception of the divine as follows: 'Concerning the gods, I have no way of knowing either that/what they are, or that/what they are not, or what form they have: for there are many things that prevent knowledge, (namely) the unclarity and the fact that human life is short.' Diog. Laert. (9.52): '*περὶ μὲν θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι οὔθ' ὡς εἰσίν, οὔθ' ὡς οὐκ εἰσίν· πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ κωλύοντα εἰδέναι, ἥ τ' ἀδηλότης καὶ βραχὺς ὢν ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.*'

[103] *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 188–90; *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 82ff.; *Il.* 3.383ff.; Eur. *Hipp.* 1389; Thgn. *El.* 1, 5–10; *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 227ff.; Ar. *Av.* 1706ff. Cf. also Richardson (1974, 252–3); Gladigow (1990, 98–121), and Henrichs (2010).

[104] On the omnipotence of the Greek gods see Pleket (1981) and, more recently, Versnel (2011, 439–92).

thought to be beyond human abilities and limitations, then that somebody had to be a god or a goddess. The man of rustic appearance, for instance, who slaughtered many Persians at the battle of Marathon while fighting with a plough was no ordinary man, but the hero Ἐχετλαῖος or Ἔχετλος ('He of the plough-handle', from ἐχέτλη 'plough handle'); the Argive woman who killed King Pyrrhus with a tile was not an ordinary woman but Demeter in the guise of a woman;[105] the man who led his enormous military forces from Asia into Europe might have been Xerxes but, having accomplished a deed of superhuman proportions, he was mistaken for Zeus in human disguise while crossing the Hellespont.[106]

Paradoxically enough, absence—sudden and unaccountable absence to be more precise—may also be perceived as evidence of divine presence too. The epiphany of the hero Echetlaeus, whose divine contribution to the battle of Marathon was deduced from his sudden disappearance (μετὰ τὸ ἔργον ἦν ἀφανής), is a good illustration of this premise.[107] The two signs that triggered the suspicion that Echetlaeus might be an otherworldly being were a) his fierceness and bravery, which are essentially forms or manifestations of superhuman power, and, of course, b) his subsequent *aphaneia*, his sudden and unaccountable vanishing. Nevertheless, it was only after the oracle of Delphi confirmed the identity of the hero in question that cultic honours were instituted in his name. When epiphanies resulted in the establishing of a new cult (as they frequently did), the religious authority of Delphi was often required to confirm human suspicion of dealings with the divine, primarily because what humans perceive with their senses and/or intellect is not always reliable.[108] Similarly, in the series of inscriptions from Magnesia on the Maeander, often referred to as *Magnetum asylia*, epiphany related action is taken (i.e. Panhellenic festival, and athletic games are instituted, and *asylia* is granted to the city) only after the Delphic oracle has been consulted.[109] The goddess Artemis appeared along with her brother in the dreams of her priestess. The apparition, nevertheless, needed further decipherment, and the Delphic oracle had to be consulted.

Encountering a god in whatever shape or form, either in dream visions or in waking life, was a life-changing event and one that often required further

[105] Paus. 1. 13.7–8 reporting an Argeian tradition that had also become the subject matter of a local epic poem by Lykeas. Plutarch in his *Pyrrhos* (34.1–4) mentions the same episode of the murderous tile that was thrown by a woman in a fit of rage in an attempt to protect her son, who was one of the soldiers, but he does not identify the woman with Demeter.

[106] Hdt. 7.56.

[107] Paus. 1.32.5 with Jameson (1951, 49ff.). Similarly, in the battle of Thurii in 282 BC the Romans saw a young man of extraordinary height marching in front of them, encouraging them, and performing miracles of bravery (*magnitudinis iuuenis primum eos hortari ad capessendam fortitudinem coepit*). It was only later that they realized that it was the god Mars, who came to his people's rescue: Val. Max. 1.8.6. On Mars' epiphany at the siege of Thurii and Valerius Maximus' account of Roman battle epiphanies, see Platt (forthcoming).

[108] On epiphanies initiating sacred rites, see Sowa (1984, 236–80), Clay (1989, 267ff.), Garland (1992, 53ff.) and chapter 8 in this volume. On the poetics of sight in Greek epiphany see Henrichs (2010, 33–4) with further bibliography.

[109] *Syll.*³ 557–62. Cf., for instance, *Syll.*³ 557, the foundation document for the Leukophryena festival; dated to 208/7 BC; found at Magnesia: *I.Magnesia* 16 + p. 295 (for ll. 1–10); Kern, *Hermes* 36, 1901, 491–6; Ebert, *Philologus* 126, 1982, 198–216; *SEG* 32, 1147; cf. Sosin, *TAPhA* 139, 2009, 369–410. See also my discussion in chapter 8, 'Explanatory function'.

elucidation, as can be seen from this second-century AD inscription from the oracle of Didyma:[110]

vacat ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ.
ἡ ἱέρεια τῆς Θεσμοφόρου Δήμητρος Ἀλεξάνδρα
ἐρωτᾷ· ἐπεὶ ἐξότε τὴν ἱερατείαν ἀνείληφεν, οὐ-
δέποτε οὕτως οἱ θεοὶ ἐνφανεῖς δι᾽ ἐπιστάσεων
γεγένηται· τοῦτο δὲ καὶ διὰ παρθένων καὶ γυ- 5
ναικῶν, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ δι᾽ ἀρρένων καὶ νηπίων,
τί τὸ τοιοῦτο καὶ εἰ ἐπὶ αἰσίωι. θεὸς ἔχρη[σε·]
ἀθάνατοι μερόπεσσιν ἁμ᾽ ἐρχόμενοι π.[—]
[γνώ]μην φράζ[ου]σι καὶ ἣν τειμὴν [—] 10
[—].νόον εἰθ̣[—]

Good Fortune.
The priestess of Thesmophoros Demeter Alexandra
poses the following question: why is it that since she took up the priesthood
never before had the gods made themselves that manifest
through oneiric epiphanies. On the one hand this has happened in the form of virgins and
married women, and on the other hand in the form of males and children;
what kind of thing is this and whether it is propitious. The god replied as follows:
Immortals consort with mortals . . .
they express their view and there is honour . . .

This is the first part of the inscription, which was found in Büyük Çakmaklık near Miletus. Alexandra inquired why, since she took up the priesthood, the gods have manifested themselves with unprecedented frequency, in a variety of shapes and forms.[111] The reply of the oracle survives in a lamentably fragmented form. Even so, the key theme of the oracular response is clearly discernible: epiphanies can function as status-elevation mechanisms, as chapter 8 shows. Epiphanies bestow honour and prestige upon their perceivers. The emphasis on the unprecedented frequency of divine manifestations functions precisely as such, that is as a means of personal glorification for the priestess of Demeter. Alexandra enjoyed a close

[110] *I.Miletos* 481 = *I.Didyma* 496; *Hellenica* 11–12, pp. 543–6; *ZPE* 1971, 207–9, no. 8 (ll. 2, 3, 4, 10, 13, 14 of section b); Fontenrose (1978, 196, nos 22–3). Cf. also Versnel (1987, 45–6).

[111] I follow Robert (1960, 544), who maintains that *dia epistaseōn* means 'appearing in oneiric visitations'; while *dia parthenōn, gynaikōn*, etc. means 'in the shape of virgins, married women, etc'. Lane Fox (1986, 102–3) retains Robert's reading for the first prepositional phrase (*τοῦτο δὲ καὶ διὰ παρθένων καὶ γυναικῶν*), but translates the second one *δι᾽ ἀρρένων καὶ νηπίων* as 'appearing to girls and women, etc'. Van Straten (1976, 17) rightly emphasizes that *epistasis* is the technical term for divine manifestation in dreams. Compare here the formulae *ho theos epistas* in the Epidaurian Iamata and its female counterpart *epistasa* for the dream manifestation of Athena Lindia in the temple Chronicle. The same scholar then interprets the oracle as meaning that the priestess expresses her worry about the unprecedented frequency of epiphanies in the dreams not only of girls and women, but also of men and infants. In this view, the dream visions were perceived by the people mentioned not by the priestess. There are two epigraphic and papyrological parallels (*IG* II^2, 2963 and *P.Oxy*. XI.1381, 148) for this sort of interpretation, where '*dia* plus noun' means 'by appearing in the dream to'. Van Straten is partly right, because in both examples he quotes *dia* is followed by the name of a priest, which could indeed mean that the deity appeared in his or her dream. But I think it is highly unlikely a priestess would inquire about the divine nature of children's dreams. I have, therefore, taken it to mean that it was the priestess who dreamt of the divinities in the shape of virgins, married women, men, and infants. Cf. also *SEG* 3, 226, 15, where *epistaseōn* is in connection to a verbal form meaning 'pretending'.

proximity with the divine, Apollo's oracle seems to be saying, and her priesthood was blessed by the gods. This notion of close proximity with the divine is further intensified by the ostensible 'Homericity' of the narrative, i.e. the use of Homeric language and imagery, which even alludes to famous *exempla* of Homeric *theophilia* (such as Athena–Tydeus, Athena–Odysseus, etc.).[112]

It is entirely possible that Alexandra felt that this succession of epiphanies signified some sort of crisis and made sincere inquiries about the semantics of this wealth of encounters with the divine. Of course, it is also entirely possible that Alexandra went to the trouble and the expense of asking for a Didymeian response to her troubles simply because she strongly desired that her community (and why not posterity as well?) should witness her extraordinary synergy with the divine. The latter interpretation is further supported by the second half of the inscription, which preserves the god's reply to yet another of Alexandra's queries, which is unfortunately not preserved. In the last three lines of the oracular response we read:

τοὔνεκα δὴ σὺ μὲν ἀρρήτῳ Θεραπηΐ̣[δι τειμῇ]
[ἧ̣] τ̣έλος εὐσταθίης βιότου μετιοῦ[σα φαάνθης]
[ὅργια τ' Εὐ]μόλποιο̣ [. .6. . .].c.3.[—]

Therefore you Alexandra, via ineffable honour appropriate to a servant of the goddess, you have manifestly shown yourself to have a share in the end of a well-balanced life and the mysteric rites of Eumolpos . . .

What Alexandra, priestess of Demeter, was after was apparently a loud, clear, and, above all, public declaration of her intimate relationship with the divine. She wanted the world to know that she was *the gods' nearest and dearest* and she also wanted to make her rightful claims on the symbolic capital that this extreme proximity with the divine conveyed.

Apart from a very limited number of individuals who are *theophileis* ('dear to the gods'), and people who find themselves somewhere on the borderline between the mortal and the immortal spheres (such as the Hyperboreans and the Phaeacians), the rest of humanity communicates with the divine through the mediation of divine disguise.[113] When the epiphanic deity does not undergo some sort of metamorphosis, it is usually the human perceiver who is metamorphosed. Possible metamorphoses range from changing shape (turning into an animal, a stone, becoming pregnant, or disabled) to death. A sudden encounter with the divine undisguised and in full majesty may result in a wide spectrum of human disasters, ranging from unconsciousness, paralysis, and blindness to death itself. Notable examples include Iodama, the priestess who encountered Athena in the middle of the night at her temple in Boeotia and was turned into stone; Semele, who encountered Zeus in full majesty and died; Teiresias, who unwillingly laid eyes on a naked Athena and lost his vision; and Actaeon, who saw Artemis bathing and was turned into a deer that was eventually devoured by his own hunting dogs.[114]

[112] On the Homeric character of the narrative, see Lane Fox (1986, 103–4). See also fig. 2.4 and chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies'.

[113] More on this topic in Kindt (forthcoming).

[114] Semele: Diod. Sic. 3.64.3–5. Cf. also Eur. *Hipp.* 555 and Hyg. *Fab.* 179, who like Diodorus attribute Semele's death to Zeus' thunderbolt; [Apollod]. *Bibl.* 3.26–8, on the other hand, most interestingly reports that the Theban princess died out of fright (*dia phobon*), a typical reaction to

In the section 'Form and transformation' of chapter 5, I examine a series of erotic epiphanies, where transformation features prominently. But in other situational contexts, too, mortals and immortals appear to be fully aware of this danger: immortals disguise themselves when they seek interaction with the terrestrial world, while humans, playing their part of the game, constantly endeavour to decipher the riddle of the 'other' that confronts them.

A constant dynamic interplay between the manifest outer structure and the concealed, inner structure dominates mortal–immortal interaction in Greek culture. But this dichotomy does not come without its problems. This is what Deborah Steiner calls 'the fundamental paradox of the divine disguise': despite the fact that mortals are unable by their nature to face the gods directly, they must, nonetheless, suffer for their cognitive failure to penetrate the divine disguise.[115] Steiner rightly maintains that analogous sensorial and intellectual challenges are posed by the images of the gods.[116] In particular, she thinks of cult statues as both containing and concealing the unattainable force of the divine, thus allowing for safe interaction between the deity depicted and the worshippers.[117] Furthermore, as Platt argues, under certain circumstances a divine image could be understood as a *sēma* of divinity whilst at other times it could be thought of as an encounter with divinity itself. To be sure, as the ensuing chapter 1 argues, the same paradox permeates all morphological variants of divine epiphany, not simply the anthropomorphic and what is called in this book *effigies* epiphany. Even in cases where the divine manifests itself in zoomorphic form, as a *phasma*, as *pars pro toto*, or in amorphous shape, in every single case the perceiver is challenged to discover the god within.

full-scale epiphanies. Teiresias: Call. *Hymn*. 5.51ff.; Actaeon: [Apollod]. *Bibl*. 3.30–1; Iodama: Paus. 9.34.2.

[115] Steiner (2001, 81, n. 5). [116] Steiner (2001, 80–2).

[117] This is the primary focus of Platt (2011, esp. 77–123), on cult statues.

1

Divine morphology

This chapter looks at the different forms in which the divine manifests itself, and, more specifically, at the ways the Greeks as a culture dealt with the problem of divine morphology. The main questions I shall be asking here are: a) what did the Greek gods look like; b) whether the specific forms the immortals acquired affected their perception by the mortals; and finally, c) whether this variety in divine morphology had an impact on the ways the epiphanic narrative per se was construed. In particular, I propose that divine epiphany took the following forms in the religious consciousness of the Greeks:

i. Anthropomorphic epiphany
ii. Enacted epiphany
iii. *Effigies* epiphany
iv. *Phasma* epiphany
v. *Pars pro toto* epiphany
vi. Zoomorphic epiphany
vii. Amorphous epiphany.

It goes without saying that these subdivisions of forms the Greek deities acquired when manifesting themselves—like those others which refer to the various contexts of epiphany and its sociopolitical functions—are meant to function not as rigorous lines of demarcation, but rather as a way of emphasizing certain salient morphological characteristics of the divine manifestation in the individual narratives. This is by no means the only way to organize and discuss divine epiphany. The main reason this classification has been privileged over others is not only because it is a useful heuristic model in itself, but also because it seems to be in harmony with the ways the Greeks themselves thought about epiphany and chose to articulate the epiphanic experience verbally, ritually, and artistically.

Besides representing what in my view were the forms in which the Greeks encountered the divine from Archaic to Hellenistic and Imperial times and beyond, the proposed divisions are meant also to bring into the foreground the different sets of conceptual challenges each form of epiphany posed for its perceivers. How easy or difficult, for instance, would it be for the ancient worshipper to believe that a deity could manifest its godhead in the form of an animal or in the form of a *phasma*, or, indeed, in no form at all (amorphous epiphany)? Do we have any evidence confirming that the pious majority shared the concerns of the intellectual elite as to whether the very notion of divine polymorphism could pose a threat to the belief of the existence of these gods? To take Plato's apprehension as accounted for in the second book of the *Republic*, for example, why would

the divine beings degrade themselves by taking the likeness of mortals?[1] Why indeed should there be a need for such multiplicity and diversity in divine morphology in the first place? These and other related questions unavoidably bring up the problem of how closely divine morphology was intertwined with divine ontology: do the gods exist if they cannot be perceived? A brief discussion of the culturally determined nature of divine morphology sets off the general discussion and it is followed by a detailed analysis of the individual forms.

But what do we mean by the 'culturally determined nature of epiphanic form'? Weren't all Greek gods unequivocally human-like? Wasn't this notion of anthropomorphic gods precisely what sophisticated minds like Xenophanes and Plato fought against so intensely?[2] Or was this anthropomorphic likeness not what the divine body really looked like, but merely one of its many guises? And if so, why would there be a need for a disguise in the first place? Why couldn't the mortal–immortal interaction take place openly and unmediatedly?

As mentioned in the introductory section, a sudden encounter with the divine, our narratives seem to be saying, when undisguised and in full majesty, may result in a wide spectrum of disasters for its human perceiver(s), ranging from temporary unconsciousness to permanent paralysis, from zoomorphic transformation to petrification, and from blindness to insanity, and even death.[3] Perceiving the gods seemed to have been likened to the very process of acquiring a new piece of knowledge, and was thought of as difficult, painful, and dangerous; and yet, perceiving the divine, penetrating the facade of disguise, and knowing the inner divine nature could also turn out to be an extremely rewarding process. In our sources both sides, mortals and immortals, appear to be fully aware of this ambiguity and danger: immortals disguise themselves when they seek interaction with the terrestrial world, while humans constantly endeavour to decode the divine 'other'.

This type of knowledge, the knowledge of divine morphology (i.e. what a god looks like), was not an innate, inherent type of knowledge. It was by contrast a culturally constructed one. To begin with, the time the Greeks spent looking at religious artefacts in and out of the temple must have had an immense impact on the way they conceptualized the divine and its bodily physiognomy. As Jeremy Tanner puts it, 'Greek statues of deities were embedded in a specific religious culture. Conceptual and material frameworks associated with this culture shaped practices of viewing and the sensory apprehension of the statues.'[4] And it is quite impossible to find out which came first: did the gods first manifest themselves in visions in specific forms, which were then transplanted into the sphere of artistic representation? Or did the dreamers and the visionaries dream of their gods the way they did precisely because their scopic regime, their visuality, was shaped accordingly by religious art?[5] Perhaps it would be more to the point to recognize a

[1] *Resp*. 2.381b–381e.

[2] Cf. for instance: Xenophanes, Fr. 11, Sext. *adv. math*. ix, 193; Fr. 14, Clem. *Strom*. v, 109,2; Fr. 16, Clem. *Strom*. vii, 22,1; Fr. 15, Clem. *Strom*. v, 109,3; and Fr. 23, Clem. *Strom*. v, 109,1.

[3] More on this in chapter 4, '*Dei in remotis*'.

[4] Tanner (2001, 261).

[5] I have borrowed the term scopic regime from Jay (1993), but I use it to denote 'a way of seeing'. On visuality in general, see Jay (1988), Bryson (1988), and Harris and Fairchild Ruggles (2007). For a definition of ritual-centred visuality see Elsner (2007, 25).

relationship of interdependence between artistic representation of the divine and its visual perception and representation in the visions and the dreams of their devotees.

The same interplay between pictorial representations and visionary experiences of the divine is suggested by discussions of parallels between modern epiphanies and works of art.[6] The American philosopher Kendall Walton suggested that for a certain pictorial representation to be meaningful for the members of a society, they have to participate knowingly in what he calls the 'make-believe game'. If they were to look, for instance, at the appropriate part of the Sistine chapel, they 'make-believe' that they see the god; they don't literally see the god.[7] A Catholic or Orthodox Christian who dreams of a woman dressed in black bearing a child in her arms identifies her as the Virgin Mary. The dreamer is prompted to do so by comparing the vision with other religious paintings (s)he has seen in church or in books. Parallels drawn between visions and perceiving representational art are further supported by the fact that visions are quite often described in terms of viewing images. In other words, both visionary experiences and viewing pictures are subjected to an extent to the same vision rules. It is telling that mystics of different religious denominations tend to perceive in their visions entities which they had prior expectations of perceiving. Thus, a Jewish mystic may dream of the throne of God, while a Catholic would probably perceive the Virgin Mary, while a Hindu devotee may dream of Krishna.[8]

Likewise, the Greeks concentrated mainly not on what a god was, but how (s)he looked, in what ways (s)he was different from mortals, and the possible ways to safely disambiguate the divine presence. In fact, it was exactly these popular artistic representations of the divine that informed the popular perception of divine morphology, i.e. what the gods looked like. Conversely, divine manifestations taking place in the dreams or the waking reality of privileged individuals, and even of communities, gave rise and licence to artistic reformations and innovations in the ways of portraying the divine. The reader is reminded here of the unconventional statuary representation of Apollo with four hands and four ears (*τετράχειρα καὶ τετράωτον*) in Sparta, which commemorated Apollo's epiphany at the battle of Amyclae;[9] as well as the equally unfamiliar and provocative (both for the synchronic viewers and the modern readers) statue of an Athena wounded in the thigh at the Arcadian city of Teuthis, which was instigated by a vision of Athena as a wounded warrior in one of her many battle epiphanies.[10] The relationship, then, between the popular perception and the visual representation of the divine is not one-directional; it is one of mutual influence and interdependence. In other words, the cultural context determines not only how the divine body was identified in a person's waking reality or his dreams, but also how the divine was portrayed in contemporary artistic representations. Even when the deity appears in person, (s)he often resembles his/her standard statuary

[6] See for instance Walton (1973) and Runzo (1977).

[7] Walton (1973, 309–13). This 'make-believe' theory was fully developed in his 1990 magnum opus entitled *Mimesis as Make-Believe: On the Foundations of the Representational Arts*, Harvard University Press.

[8] Runzo (1977, 312).

[9] Sosib. *FGrHist* 595 F25 = Zenob. 1.54.

[10] Paus. 8.28.4–6. On battle epiphanies, see the relevant section in chapter 2.

representation. This is for instance the case with the Nymphs' epiphany to the distressed Daphnis.[11] It was in Daphnis' dreams that the Nymphs manifested themselves: they appeared as tall, beautiful, half-naked, barefoot women with their hair spread loose on their shoulders. They looked 'just like their images' (τοῖς ἀγάλμασιν ὅμοιαι). But what does a divine body look like anyway?

ANTHROPOMORPHIC EPIPHANY: EXPLORING THE TENSION BETWEEN THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE BODY

ἦν γὰρ τὸ κάλλος οὐκ ἀνθρώπινον ἀλλὰ θεῖον
Chariton, De Chaerea et Callirhoe *1.1.2*

What probably comes to mind first is the anthropomorphic statuary representations of a maternal Demeter, or a voluptuous Aphrodite, a bearded middle-aged Asclepius, a youthful beardless Hermes, and so on. From the fifth century on, every deity appears to be attributed with an individual bodily physiognomy. Burkert and others have ascribed this overtly anthropomorphic naturalism of the Classical era, which followed the admittedly more schematic divine bodies of Archaic times, to the influence of the Homeric descriptions of the bodies of the gods as similar enough to that of the humans.[12] This view takes a bit too literally Herodotus' famous statement about Homer and Hesiod giving the Greeks their gods, as well as the bodily forms of these gods.[13] This chapter argues that the common perception of divine morphology could not have been solely informed by the representation of the gods in epic poetry. It may have been equally influenced, for instance, by the popular representations of the divine body in visual art, and/or necessitated by traditional Greek practices of divine embodiment appropriate for both the cultic and the theatrical *skēnē*.[14]

Indeed, at this stage of our discussion, it is essential to point out that anthropomorphism is *not the only way* the gods choose to manifest themselves to mortals; it is simply *one of the many ways*. This premise can best be exemplified by the gods' propensity to polymorphism plainly attested in Homer and the Homeric hymns. In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, for instance, Apollo manifests himself to his prospective priesthood first as a dolphin, then as a star giving off sparks—if not as light itself—that lit the hearth of his Delphic temple, and, finally, as a princely youth with long dark hair.[15] In an analogous fashion, Dionysus in the homonymous Homeric hymn manifests himself first in the likeness of a prince (and therefore a potential victim for abduction in the eyes of the greedy pirates) and

[11] *Daphnis and Chloe* 2.23.

[12] Burkert (1991, 87). One suspects, though, that the relationship between popular artistic representations and poetic diction must not simply have been one of direct borrowing.

[13] Hdt. 2.53.

[14] More on this topic in the 'Enacted epiphany' section below.

[15] *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 388–486 West with Bremer's (1975, 2–6) succinct analysis of the three forms: *Tiergestalt*, *Lichtgestalt*, *Menschgestalt*. See also Sowa (1984, 244–5), Clay (1989, 80–3).

subsequently in the likeness of a lion, whilst other zoomorphic (a bear) and phytomorphic (a climbing vine tree) and *pars pro toto* (wine) manifestations of his divine power feature as well.[16] Likewise, in *Iliad* book 4, Athena arrives at the battlefield in the form of a gleaming star (the morphological equivalent of Apollo's *Lichtgestalt* in the *Homeric Hymn*?), but takes the anthropomorphic likeness of Laodocus to approach her target Pandarus more effectively.[17] And in book 3 of the *Odyssey*, Athena accompanies Telemachus during his voyage to meet Nestor in the guise of Mentor, but she leaves Pylos behind in the likeness of a sea eagle (*φήνῃ εἰδομένη*) causing thus much admiration and amazement among the spectators.[18]

But even if we were to move away from the world of epic and the Hymns and focus on epiphanic narratives that take place in a cultic context, we would still detect different variants of divine morphology appearing in the same narrative, or even more commonly different variants of divine morphology featuring in different authors' accounts of the same epiphanic manifestation. Apollo may have appeared as a youthful archer or clad in darkness on the Trojan battlefield, but on the first day of the Carneia festival his presence would have been felt primarily through his cult statue. Correspondingly, Athena in the Argive Plynteria manifests herself no longer as the Iliadic belligerent warrior goddess, but in the form of a clothed and newly washed cult statue of a virgin.[19] In response to repeated entreating of her cult statue, Helen manifested herself in the form of a woman (*γυναῖκα λέγεται ἐπιφανῆναι*) at Therapne and transformed an ugly baby girl into the irresistible woman that Demaratus' mother turned out to be.[20] But it was her cult statue that the baby's nurse had repeatedly prayed to in order to achieve the aforementioned miraculous results.[21] Just before the battle of Salamis the Aeacidae were entreated and arrived in the form of their wooden images, according to Herodotus, and as *phasmata* and *eidōla*, according to Plutarch.[22]

Polymorphism is a particularly distinctive trait of Asclepius. His devotees often experienced his presence in the form of his cult statue, in the form of a snake, as well as in the form of a beautiful youth, and even in the likeness of a youth clad in gleaming military attire—a likeness that brought him closer to the belligerent gods of the *Iliad*.[23] The Dioscuri were often seen as bright stars appearing on the masts of ships, as they were seen on either side of Lysander's ship, while, apparently, they

[16] *Hymn. Hom. Bacch.* 1–58 West with Sowa (1984, 246–7).

[17] *Il.* 4.74–92.

[18] *Od.* 3.370–2. The section 'Zoomorphic epiphany' below debates whether this is indeed an epiphany. Nestor's reactions to Athena's departure are typical of an eyewitness to an epiphanic manifestation.

[19] Apollo: Call. *Hymn.* 2.1ff. with Dickie (2002, 113ff.); Athena: Call. *Hymn.* 5.1ff. with Hunter and Fuhrer (2002, 159–60). More on Apollo's and Athena's epiphanies in the discussion of 'mimetic' Callimachean hymns and the 'Epiphanic festivals' section in chapter 6, and the '*Effigies* epiphany' section in this chapter.

[20] On the cult of Helen and the Dioscuri in Therapnē, see Larson (1995, 69–70).

[21] Hdt. 6.61–2 Legrand.

[22] Hdt. 8.65 and 8.84; Plut. *Them.* 15.2. These passages are discussed more extensively in the '*Effigies* epiphany' and '*Phasma* epiphany' sections below.

[23] Cult statue: Aristid. *Or.* 50.50–1 Keil; snake: Paus. 2.10.3 (on this passage and many more similar examples of zoomorphic manifestations see the 'Zoomorphic epiphany' section below); handsome youth: *IG* IV^2, 1, B25; youth clad in armour: *IG* IV^2, 1, 128, 59–79.

were equally expected to manifest themselves in the likeness of two youths with crimson *chlamys* riding on white horses, if we are to judge from Aristomenes' successful stratagem.[24]

These examples could easily be multiplied.[25] They all demonstrate that assuming an anthropomorphic guise was only one of the many forms the Greeks as a culture imagined their gods as manifesting themselves in. It is exactly this kind of divine polymorphism embedded in popular cultural production (with an extra emphasis on misrepresentation of the divine form and identity in poetry) that Plato bans from the ideal polis in the second book of his *Republic* (II 380d) as harmful for the young Guardians:

> ἆρα γόητα τὸν θεὸν οἴει εἶναι καὶ οἷον ἐξ ἐπιβουλῆς φαντάζεσθαι ἄλλοτε ἐν ἄλλαις ἰδέαις ποτὲ μὲν αὐτὸν γιγνόμενον, [καὶ] ἀλλάττοντα τὸ αὑτοῦ εἶδος εἰς πολλὰς μορφάς, ποτὲ δὲ ἡμᾶς ἀπατῶντα καὶ ποιοῦντα περὶ αὑτοῦ τοιαῦτα δοκεῖν, ἢ ἁπλοῦν τε εἶναι καὶ πάντων ἥκιστα τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ἰδέας ἐκβαίνειν;
>
> Do you really think that a god is an enchanter, able to manifest himself in different forms at different times, sometimes changing himself from his own form into many shapes, sometimes deceiving us by making us think that he has done it? Or do you think he is simple and least of all likely to step out of his own form?[26]

The same notion of divine polymorphism as integral to divine epiphany is intensely exploited by Aristophanes in the *Clouds* to produce a strong comic effect; when Strepsiades asks Socrates why the Cloud goddesses look like women, Socrates explains (*Nub*. 348): 'They take any form they like!' (*γίγνονται πάνθ' ὅ τι βούλονται*).[27] The notion that because they are clouds, they can look like whatever they like produces an immediate comic effect; but the joke, I think, extends to the multiformity of divine manifestations and the problems of perceiving gods in disguise, the implication being that gods change their shape as easily and quickly as clouds.

To be sure, the form in which a deity manifested himself or herself heavily depended on the spatio-temporal context of the manifestation (e.g. an *effigies* epiphany, that is the god in the form of his cult statue, often occurs in a festival context), as well as on the wider generic context of the narrative in which it gets reported (e.g. anthropomorphic epiphanies are more common in epic and in tragedy than, for example, in the works of the historians). Nevertheless, even within the more restricted generic context of hexameter poetry, there is much

[24] Dioscuri as stars: e.g. Plut. *Lys*. 12.1. See also Cook (1914, vol. 1, 760–5). Dioscuri as youths: Paus. 4.27.1–3. A more detailed discussion of Aristomenes' stratagem can be found in the 'Epiphanic stratagems' section of chapter 2.

[25] They could even be extended to comparisons with some of the Judeo-Christian epiphanic material. H. J. Rose (1938, 141, n. 104), for instance, rightly maintains that Jesus's body also fluctuates between an anthropomorphic and more aniconic forms in the epiphanic narratives of the Synoptic Gospels (*Matthew* 28.16–20; *Mark* 16.14–18; *Luke* 24.33–49) that cover the period between the Resurrection and the Ascension. However, this line of argumentation cannot be pursued here any further.

[26] Trans. Grube and Reeve with modifications; cf. also *Resp*. 381b–e. On how these passages are embedded within the wider thematology of book 2 see Julia Anna's *Introduction to Plato's Republic*.

[27] Cf. Ar. *Nub*. 323–49.

more multiformity than the criticism of Xenophanes would allow us to believe.[28] Firstly, the gods of epic manifest themselves not only in anthropomorphic form, but also in *effigies* form (Athena's agalmatophany in book 6 of the *Iliad* is perhaps the most obvious example), in an amorphous form as light or darkness (cf. here Athena's epiphany as a gleaming star mentioned above, or that of Apollo sliding stealthily in the Achaean camp like the night or in the middle of the night, depending on which reading one adopts), and perhaps even in zoomorphic form.[29] Secondly, comparative studies on Greek and Near Eastern epic poetry have shown that adopting a predominantly anthropomorphic form to conceptualize and represent divine manifestation follows the specific modes and registers of the genre and does not invent 'immoral' and 'grotesque' gods.[30] More importantly, by attributing anthropomorphic corporeal identity to gods, epic poets not only turned gods into humans, but also humans into gods, as the author of *De sublimitate* (9.7) puts it:

> Ὅμηρος γάρ μοι δοκεῖ παραδιδοὺς τραύματα θεῶν στάσεις τιμωρίας δάκρυα δεσμὰ πάθη πάμφυρτα τοὺς μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν Ἰλιακῶν ἀνθρώπους ὅσον ἐπὶ τῇ δυνάμει θεοὺς πεποιηκέναι, τοὺς θεοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους.[31]
>
> Indeed, it seems to me that in attributing to the gods stories of wounds, and quarrels, retaliations, tears, confinement, and stories of various other sufferings, Homer has portrayed—as far as lay within his power—the men who appear in *the Siege of Troy* like gods, and the gods like men.

The passage quoted above—which links conceptually the humanization of the divine body with the deification of the human body—serves as an excellent introduction to the next part of our discussion, which focuses on the tension between the mortal and the immortal body, when the latter is portrayed as modelled on the first.[32] This tension permeates almost all anthropomorphic epiphanies, but becomes particularly pertinent in narratives that describe human guise as insufficient coverage of the god's true nature. Compare, for instance, how Demeter's metamorphosis into a *trophos* past childbearing age (γρηὶ παλαιγενέι ἐναλίγκιος) does not cover her divine stature and luminosity sufficiently: while entering the house of Keleos her head reaches the roof and the doorway is filled with divine radiance.[33] Even though Metaneira sees only what looks like another human being, she experiences stereotypical epiphanic reactions

[28] Or is it rather Clement of Alexandria quoting him out of context? For Xenophanes' criticism see Frs 11, 14, 16, 15, 23, and 24 with Kirk Raven and Schofield (1983[2], 166ff.).

[29] Athena's agalmatophany: *Il.* 6.297–311; more on this passage in the '*Effigies* epiphany' section; Apollo is likened to the night (νυκτὶ ἐοικώς) or is sliding through the night (νυκτὶ ἐλυσθείς) with Zenodotus in *Il.* 1.47; Athena as a gleaming star: *Il.* 4.74–82; Athena in avian shapes: *Il.* 7.17–22 and 58–60, *Od.* 1.319–24, 3.371–85, 22.239–40.

[30] For more information on these comparative studies and bibliographical references, see Burkert (1991). For anthropomorphic epiphanies as a 'poetic' or 'literary' device or part of the 'epic machinery', see for instance Schlesinger (1936–7), Kullmann (1985), Dietrich (1985/6, 177).

[31] Cf. also Eitrem (1936, 125).

[32] Divine body and anthropomorphism: Vernant (1986) and (1989); Buxton (2009, 157–90); Henrichs (2010, 32–5); Osborne (2011, 185–202).

[33] *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 188–90. In chapter 6, 'The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*: an insight into mystic epiphanies at Eleusis?', there is a detailed discussion of this passage and of Demeter's epiphany as a whole.

such as awe (αἰδώς), reverence (σέβας), and pale fear (χλωρὸν δέος). However, the most striking case of human guise functioning almost like a garment too short to conceal the divine nature beneath is that of Aphrodite in the third book of the *Iliad*, when approaching Helen. Aphrodite's anthropomorphic disguise as one of Helen's old and faithful maids fails to cover up the goddess's beauty; the queen notices the divinely beautiful neck (περικαλλέα δειρήν), the desirable bosom (στήθεά θ' ἱμερόεντα), and the sparkling eyes of the goddess (ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα) hiding beneath the wrinkly skin of her maid and experiences awe (θάμβησεν). Anchises experiences reverential fear (ταρβήσειεν) and awe (θαύμαινεν) of similar intensity when he looks at an anthropomorphized Aphrodite, whilst he only lays eyes on an 'untamed' virgin (παρθένῳ ἀδμήτῃ), although admittedly of exquisite beauty. It is the goddess's exceptional appearance (εἶδος), height (μέγεθος), and above all the radiance of her body and her garments that renders the goddess's human disguise somewhat insufficient to conceal her identity.[34]

Notwithstanding the difficulty of concealing true divine nature beneath human appearance, an anthropomorphic likeness can serve as a useful tool for approaching the ephemeral and fragile race of men. Demeter cannot approach the people of Eleusis or, indeed, any of the humans, unless she first spends quite some time 'softening' her external appearance: εἶδος ἀμαλδύνουσα (*H.H.Dem.* 94). The goddess's extreme beauty (κάλλος) and stature (μέγεθος) and the radiance (φέγγος) and fragrance (ὀδμή ἱμερόεσσα)[35] that the divine body and garments emit—all typical concomitant *sēmeia* of divine manifestations in general—come to the surface when Demeter reaches the final stage of her gradual manifestation (275–80) and apparently they come as a great shock to Metaneira, who drops her child and collapses speechless on the ground.[36] In Demeter's case her true qualities are revealed along with her true identity when she throws old age away, as if throwing off a garment or shedding a layer of skin. In Aphrodite's case, the goddess, who has been naked during her erotic epiphany to Anchises, needs to put all her garments and jewellery back on before she reveals her divine status to her human lover. Extreme beauty and stature (173–5) once again accompany her full-scale epiphany; but this is not the kind of beauty and stature that Anchises found irresistible before, when the goddess was still in disguise. These qualities in such an extreme degree cause the human perceiver to fear for his physical and mental health.[37] And even if it is not the extreme, unbridled beauty, stature, and radiance of the gods that betray them, the gods are recognizable from their bodily features that may be similar to the human ones in form, but differ radically from them in degree. A good illustration of this premise can be found in the episode of Poseidon's epiphany in the likeness of Calchas in book 13 of the *Iliad*. The god

[34] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 82–91.

[35] Fragrance: Eur. *Hipp.* 1392; *PV* 115; Thgn. *El.* 1.8–10; *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 230–1; Ar. *Av.* 1715–16; *Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 277–8. On the combination of tall and beautiful in regard to the female divine body, see also Bremmer (2008b, 23, n. 22) with further bibliography.

[36] With Richardson (1974) ad loc.

[37] Depending on how one interprets the adjective ἀμεμηνός. More on the different meanings of the word in van Eck (1978 ad loc.).

succeeds in concealing his superhuman body in every respect apart from his footprints, which are simply too big to have belonged to a human being.[38]

Beauty, stature, radiance, and fragrance are all principal concomitant *sēmeia* of a divine manifestation,[39] but they can also be potential factors of confusion, reasons for blurring the boundaries between the human and the divine body. No better case in point can be found than the episode of the tall and beautiful woman from Paeania whom Peisistratus dressed as Athena (Promachos?) and put on a chariot when he staged his own *katagōgē* into the Athenian political arena. It was mainly due to the woman's 'godlike' looks that the Athenian demos received her as Peisistratus' *pompimos daimōn* (divine escort) and started praying to her as if she was Athena in the flesh.[40] Likewise in the climactic scene of Aristophanes' *Birds*, where the *hieros gamos* of Peisetaerus and Basileia takes place, Peisetaerus enters the scene wielding the thunderbolt and is received as the new Zeus.[41] His radiance is compared to that of a dazzling star that surpasses the far-gleaming radiance of the sun; his beauty is compared to that of a woman (!) and the wreaths of incense smoke emit a divine fragrance. Yet another striking example of this kind is provided by the scene that follows Odysseus' beautification by Athena—a scene that bears all the trademarks of an epiphany scene. The goddess restores the hero's youth, beauty, and radiance and dresses him up with a clean white *chiton*; when confronted suddenly with this handsome stranger, Telemachus experiences awe and reverential fear that force him to turn his eyes away in a gesture of *aposkopein* ('looking away from', 'averting one's gaze from'): *θάμβησε δέ μιν φίλος υἱός, | ταρβήσας δ' ἐτέρωσε βάλ' ὄμματα, μὴ θεὸς εἴη*.[42] The scene recalls Anchises' analogous reactions to Aphrodite's full-scale epiphany: *τάρβησέν τε καὶ ὄσσε παρακλιδὸν ἔτραπεν ἄλλη. | ἂψ δ' αὖτις χλαίνῃ τε καλύψατο καλὰ πρόσωπα*.[43] But why would a god or a goddess appearing in full majesty cause such extreme reactions in their human perceivers?

'Gods are dangerous when they manifest themselves clearly/openly' (*χαλεποὶ δὲ θεοὶ φαίνεσθαι ἐναργείς*), Hera reminds Poseidon, thus providing a tentative answer to our question.[44] This axiom summarizes the dangers involved in unmediated mortal–immortal contact (especially visual) and showcases a belief that was

[38] Lines 71–2 yield to a number of different interpretations. Some scholars, both ancient and modern, have taken them to mean that what betrays Poseidon is not his huge footorints, but their absence. For a detailed discussion of the episode and other 'feet epiphanies', see the '*Pars pro toto* epiphany' section below.

[39] Gladigow (1990, 98–121).

[40] The fact that a herald preceded the pair and invited the spectators to witness the epiphany of Athena and her human consort—thus providing a running commentary to the scene—must also have influenced the ways Phye and Peisistratus were perceived. More on this episode in chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?'.

[41] Ar. *Av*. 1706ff. and esp. line 1765, where Peisetaerus is saluted as the most exalted of the gods. Cf. Kleinknecht (1937, 294).

[42] *Od*. 16.178–9. Cf. also *Od*. 13.430–5 for the opposite procedure, i.e. for Odysseus' miraculous 'uglyfication'; *Od*. 6.149ff., where Odysseus compares Nausikaa to Artemis in respect to her looks (*εἶδος*), stature (*μέγεθος*), and form (*φύην*).

[43] *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 181–3.

[44] *Il*. 20.128ff. The adjective *ἐναργής,* according to *LSJ* 9th edn, means 'visible, palpable in bodily shape' and it is used especially for gods appearing in their own forms. It can also mean 'manifest to the mind's eye'. On the meaning of the noun *ἐνάργεια* and its semantic development see Zanker (1981),

deep-seated in the Greek religious consciousness. Humans try to avoid direct physical confrontation with the divine by averting their eyes, or covering their face, or simply by fleeing the scene, as Ion prompts his mother to do when confronted with the sun-bright face (*ἀντήλιον πρόσωπον*) of Athena.[45] Accordingly, the gods assume anthropomorphic guise—*ἐοικώς*, *εἰκυῖα*, *εἰσάμενος*, *εἰδομένη*, *ὅμοιος*, *ὁμοίη* are some of the most common words introducing the idea of disguise—which enables them to interact with their devotees without endangering their physical or mental health.[46] Unsurprisingly enough, when the gods change their shape into a human being not only do they change their bodily appearance (*δέμας*, *εἶδος*, *φύη*), but their voice as well (*αὐδή*, *ὀμφή*, *φωνή*).[47] Only then can their camouflage be complete. The problem is that not even a human masquerade is able to conceal adequately the true divine nature within, as shown above. Eye contact, above all, should be avoided at all costs, for it seems as if the gods cannot conceal properly the radiance that divine eyes emit.[48] This explains Aphrodite's curious behaviour: she turns her eyes away from her would-be lover out of fear of being recognized, notwithstanding her full-scale anthropomorphic disguise. It also explains Helen's identifying the same goddess hiding behind the facade of the old maid. Aphrodite's beautiful neck, desirable bosom, and sparkling eyes are somehow still perceivable beneath the see-through human likeness, and it is those trademarks of feminity and sex appeal that eventually give her away.[49]

But while several thousand pages of scholarly work have been devoted to discussing the outlandish beauty and stature, as well as the exceptional fragrance and radiance, as qualities of the divine body when it takes the likeness of a human, not enough emphasis has been given to what is perhaps the most important concomitant *sēmeion* of an anthropomorphic divine revelation: *power*.[50] Power is not so much a point of comparison with the human body as a point of departure from it. Whatever the human body can do, the divine body can do better; and whatever task the human body is unable to perform—the Greeks would call this notion an *ἀδύνατον*—is effortlessly achieved by the divine body: when advancing in front of the Trojans, Apollo can destroy the embankment that the Achaeans laboriously built with one kick of his foot like a child wrecking his sand castle on

Koch-Piettre (1999), Webb (2009, 87–96), and Plett (2012). For other auditions see *Il.* 2.155, 279; 5.439; 10.512; 18.203; 20.380; Soph. *Aj.* 14–17; 92ff. (Odysseus and Ajax recognize Athena by her voice).

[45] Eur. *Ion* 1549–52. The adjective *ἀντήλιος*, *ον*, can denote either 'opposite the sun', 'facing east', said of statues that stood before the house door (cf. here Aesch. *Ag.* 519), or 'looking like the sun', 'in imitation of the sun'. There is, I think, an intentional ambiguity here between the face of the statue of the goddess reflecting the light of the sun and sun-like face of the anthropomorphic manifestation of the goddess. Both morphological variants pose the same kind of sensory and intellectual challenges for the observer.

[46] Occasionally there is a more periphrastic way of introducing the idea of divine disguise. See for instance: *δέμας δ' ἤικτο γυναικὶ | καλῇ τε μεγάλῃ τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυίῃ* (*Od.* 16.157–8) or *ἀνδρὶ δέμας εἰκυία νέῳ, ἐπιβώτηρι μήλων* (*Od.* 13.222). Prier (1989, 25ff.) offers an excellent linguistic and philosophical treatise on the vocabulary of sight and appearance in Homeric texts.

[47] Clay (1974, 129–30).

[48] Prier (1989, 57). More on the sensory and intellectual challenges of perceiving gods in the *Iliad* in Turkeltaub (2007).

[49] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 156; *Il.* 3.396–7 with Perkins (1986, 10).

[50] Henrichs (2010, 35–7) is the notable exception.

the beach;[51] Dionysus in an analogous manner remains calm and smiling whereas Pentheus bites his lips, sweats, and exhausts himself when engaged in the futile task of imprisoning the 'Liberator'.[52] Phenomenal strength and astounding resilience became the touchstone of divinity in its anthropomorphic rendering.

Consequently, it is only to be expected that whenever somebody succeeded in something that was generally thought to exceed human aptitude and limitations, then that somebody had to be a god. The man of rustic appearance, for instance, who slaughtered many Persians at the battle of Marathon while fighting with a plough could not be an ordinary man; he had to be a hero, Echetlaeus ('He of the plough tail'), who later on acquired cultic status; the Argive woman who killed King Pyrrhos with a tile could not be an ordinary woman either, by contrast she had to be Demeter in the guise of a woman (*Δήμητρα δέ φασιν εἶναι γυναικὶ εἰκασμένην*);[53] and, most famously, the man who led his enormous military forces from Asia into Europe might have been Xerxes, but having accomplished a deed of superhuman proportions, he was bound to be mistaken for Zeus in human likeness. A local man asked the Persian king while the latter was crossing the Hellespont:

> Why, o Zeus, have you assumed the likeness of a man from Persia (*ἀνδρὶ εἰδόμενος Πέρσῃ*), and changed your name from Zeus to Xerxes, and now you want to turn Hellas upside down by leading everyone on earth against it? You could have done all those things without going to that much trouble.[54]

It makes sense for a god to disguise himself as a belligerent king when intending to destroy a part of mankind, just as it makes sense for a goddess who wants to find a surrogate baby to disguise herself as a nurse. It is reasonable for Dionysus, who seeks to introduce his cult to a new city, to disguise himself as a wandering priest; but when he wants to scare the pirates, he can revert to his more terrifying zoomorphic guise; and when he mates with the Basilinna as part of the annual ritual he may look like his statue (or is it his priest again?).[55] By the same token, Aphrodite could not have enticed Anchises, had she not chosen the anthropomorphic likeness of a virgin; just as the Muses were able to manifest themselves and trade with young Archilochus in a much more effective way because of their cover as fieldworkers.

Unsurprisingly enough, Asclepius looked like a human physician when performing various operations on his various patients, but having been invoked by Issylus to assist the belligerent Spartans he had to look more like an Iliadic hero in his gleaming armour.[56] Athena would manifest herself in the likeness of Mentor to Telemachus because, perhaps, this is exactly what Telemachus needs to see: an omniscient surrogate father figure; but when manifesting herself to Odysseus, she

[51] *Il.* 15.361–5. [52] Eur. *Bacch.* 616ff.

[53] Paus. 1.13.7–8 reports an Argeian tradition that had also become the subject matter of a local epic poem by Lykeas. Plutarch in his *Pyrrhos* (34.1–4) mentions the same episode of the murderous tile that was thrown by a woman in a fit of rage in an attempt to protect her son, who was one of the soldiers, but he does not identify the woman with Demeter.

[54] Hdt. 7.56.

[55] On the basilinna and Dionysus' ritual mating see chapter 5, 'Temples, shrines, and festivals'.

[56] *IG* IV²,1 128. See esp. lines 63–5: *τὼι τύγα ποστείχοντι συνάντησας σὺν ὅπλοισιν | λαμπόμενος χρυσέοισ', Ἀσκλαπιέ. παῖς δ' ἐσιδών σε | λίσσετο χεῖρ' ὀρέγων, ἱκέτηι μύθωι σε προσαντῶν.*

chooses a wide range of anthropomorphic manifestations, all suitable to the various occasions: a young local maiden carrying a pitcher in Scheria, a noble herdsman first and then a tall beautiful woman skilled in handiwork in Ithaca, while her presence is denoted through the supernatural light that overflows the so-called Megaron scene.[57] Likewise, on the Iliadic battlefield, Athena's likeness depends very much on who is looking: if it is Pandaros she looks like Laodocus; if it is Helenos, the *oionōskopos*, she likens herself to an *oiōnos*; if it is Menelaus, she looks like Phoenix; but when she seeks to deceive Hector and lead him to his death, she takes the likeness of his dear brother Deiphobus, and so on.[58]

In a word, Greek gods aim for what could be described as a 'functional metamorphosis', namely the use of an anthropomorphic likeness that would guarantee both safe contact and effectiveness in their interaction with the human perceiver. By safe contact I mean that they would not want their devotees to have a fate similar to that of Semele (who encountered Zeus in full majesty and died), Teiresias (who unwillingly laid eyes on a naked Athena and lost his vision), Actaeon (who saw Artemis bathing and was turned into a deer that was eventually devoured by his own hunting dogs), or even Iodama, the priestess who encountered Athena in the middle of the night at her temple in Boeotia and was turned into stone (*λέγεται δὲ καὶ τοιόνδε, Ἰοδάμαν ἱερωμένην τῇ θεῷ νύκτωρ ἐς τὸ τέμενος ἐσελθεῖν καὶ αὐτῇ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν φανῆναι, τῷ χιτῶνι δὲ τῆς θεοῦ τὴν Μεδούσης ἐπεῖναι τῆς Γοργόνος κεφαλήν· Ἰοδάμαν δέ, ὡς εἶδε, γενέσθαι λίθον*).[59] As mentioned in the Introduction, being confronted with the divine suddenly and without the necessary physical and psychological preparation can potentially be a perilous experience for the ordinary human perceiver. Apart from a very limited number of individuals both of myth and cult who are *theophileis* (that is, dear to the gods), and peoples who find themselves somewhere on the borderline between the mortal and the immortal spheres (such as the Hyperboreans and the Phaeacians), the rest of humankind communicates with the divine through the mediation of divine disguise.[60] When the epiphanic deity does not undergo some sort of metamorphosis, it is usually the human perceiver that gets metamorphosed. The range of possible metamorphoses vary from permanent shift of shape or shift of state (i.e. becoming animal, stone, pregnant, or disabled) to death. In summary, Greek gods disguise themselves as human beings to make interaction with human beings possible and effective. And yet, this similarity between the body of the god and the body of the worshipper often poses an even greater challenge: how can the

[57] Maiden carrying pitcher: *Od.* 7.19ff.; noble herdsman and beautiful young woman: *Od.*13.221; light: *Od.* 19.30ff.

[58] Laodocus: *Il.* 4.85–90; bird: *Il.* 7.17ff. (though see some reservation in the 'Avian epiphanies?' section below); Phoenix: *Il.* 17.552ff.; and Deiphobus: *Il.* 22.214ff.

[59] Semele: Diod. Sic. 3.64.3–5. Cf. also Eur. *Hipp.* 555 and Hyg. *Fab.* 179, who like Diodorus attribute Semele's death to Zeus' thunderbolt; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.26–8, on the other hand, most interestingly reports that the Theban princess died out of fright (*dia phobon*), a typical reaction to full-scale epiphanies. Teiresias: Call. *Hymn.* 5.51ff; Actaeon: Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.30–1; Iodama: Paus. 9.34.2. For more on the consequences of viewing gods in full majesty see chapter 5, 'Form and transformation'.

[60] On *theophileis* men and epiphanies as signs of *theophilia* see my discussion of the terms and concept in chapter 8, 'The individual as recipient of epiphanies'; on Hyperboreans, Phaeacians, and other peoples that operate in the Greek *eschatiai* (or *in remotis*), see the relevant discussion in chapter 6, 'Sacrifice'.

mortal perceivers look upon anthropomorphized gods (*ἰδεῖν*) and recognize (*γιγνώσκειν/νοεῖν*) the divinity behind the all too human facade?[61]

Apparently not everybody was capable of solving the riddle of the mortal exterior concealing divine substance. On the whole, only the pious and the noble penetrate the god's disguise, provided that the god allows for it.[62] One recalls here the *theophilēs* Anchises sensing some sort of divinity hidden behind the facade of the beautiful maiden who stands in front of him and invites him to sleep with her. In fact, not only did he recognize the divine nature of the woman he encountered, but he also addressed her according to the cultic protocol of vowing an altar and rich sacrifices. The goddess, however, had other plans for the Trojan prince and thwarted his attempt to see through her human body. Anchises has to make the mistake of sleeping with the goddess while being *homo nesciens*. No wonder the hero protests against the injustice of the affair after the goddess's full-scale revelation: 'As soon as I laid eyes on you (*ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν*), goddess, straightaway I knew it, I realized that you were an immortal (*ἔγνων ὡς θεὸς ἦσθα*); but you lied to me.'[63]

At the opposite end of the scale to the cautious, perceptive, and pious individual lies Pentheus, who ironically asks the Stranger: 'And where is he, then, that god of yours, eh?' Dionysus answers: 'Here by my side, but you can't even see him [sc. let alone understand him]'.[64] As Dodds puts it ad loc.: 'vision demands not only an objective condition—the god's presence—but a subjective one—the percipient must himself be in a state of grace',[65] an assertion that ties well with what the omniscient narrator proclaims at a climactic point in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* (2.9): *ὠπόλλων οὐ παντὶ φαείνεται, ἀλλ' ὅτις ἐσθλός*.[66]

The gods grant only the pious, the perceptive, and, effectively, the powerful individuals glimpses, and less frequently clear visions, of their true nature.[67] One thinks here of Athena manifesting herself to Achilles alone at the beginning of the *Iliad*, or Dionysus being perceived only by the helmsman in the homonymous Homeric hymn, and then again of Athena being visible to Odysseus alone and to Eumaeus' dogs, but not to Telemachus in book 16 of the *Odyssey*.[68] It is only in some very exceptional cases that this ambiguous interplay between the body *divine* and the body *humaine* gets invested with humorous overtones. Odysseus' complaining about Athena's excessive polymorphism—when the latter manifested herself first as a noble herdsman, and then as a beautiful woman on the beach

[61] On *idein* vs. *gignoskein* in Homeric texts as two distinct stages of processing the divine presence see Dietrich (1983, 65–6): 'It is as if Homer interposed two stages between divine and human dimensions. One purely physical in which a hero could see a god, *ἰδεῖν*. The other involved mental recognition, *γνῶναι*. Ordinarily in his world, and even in the text, seeing someone and recognizing him were two logically linked steps . . . For man to see a god, however, either in his real form or in disguise, and to recognize his identity were difficult barriers to cross . . . Aeneas' ability to look directly at Apollo and to recognize him, *ἔγνω ἐσάντα ἰδών*, was quite exceptional.'

[62] Cf. *Od.* 10.573–4: *τίς ἂν θεὸν οὐκ ἐθέλοντα | ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδοιτ' ἠ ἔνθ' ἠ ἔνθα κιόντα;* and *Hymn. Hom. Dem.* 111: *οὐδ' ἔγνων· χαλεποὶ δὲ θεοὶ θνητοῖσιν ὁρᾶσθαι.*

[63] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 185–6.

[64] Eur. *Bacch.* 501–2.

[65] Dodds (1960, 140).

[66] *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 388, with Kerényi (1945, 27–8) and Bassi (1989, 221).

[67] For epiphanies reaffirming pre-existing power structures see chapter 8, 'Authoritative epiphanies: god-sent prestige and validity'.

[68] *Il.* 1.197–222; *Hymn. Hom. Bacch.* 1–58 West; *Od.* 16.155–89.

of Ithaca—is undoubtedly a rare occasion.[69] Recognizing the god within is a challenge with priceless rewards for the one who succeeds and painful consequences for the one who fails, as several of the *theoxenia* narratives most clearly show.[70] More importantly, as will soon become apparent, the challenge of recognizing the divinity within is present not only when the deity manifests itself in an anthropomorphic likeness, but also in enacted, *effigies*, zoomorphic, *phasma*, *pars pro toto*, and even amorphous form. No matter what the form of the divine is, it seems to constantly challenge the human sensory perception and demand a kind of recognition that goes beyond simple detection and acceptance; it entails obedience and acknowledgment of the mysterious ways that immortals choose in their contact with the human terrain.

Narratives like those discussed above sufficiently demonstrate that the interplay between the body of the mortals and that of the immortals is orchestrated not simply in terms of the 'similar' and 'same', but also in terms of the 'dissimilar' and the 'different' and, effectively, celebrate the human body at its best, i.e. when old age and death have not yet put their rightful claims to it. Most interestingly, they focus on the human body as being not simply the point of reference for representing the body of the divine, but also the point of departure—a point that goes amiss with Xenophanes when he criticizes humans for portraying their gods as having the same body, voice, and clothing as their human devotees. Both mortals and immortals may possess extraordinary qualities such as beauty, stature, fragrance, vigour, and radiance; but humans enjoy these features for a limited period only, whilst gods seem to enjoy them forever, being impervious to both death and old age.[71] Vernant goes so far as to speak of humans and gods possessing two different kinds of body: gods own what he describes as a 'super-body', whilst humans possess an inferior version of that body, which could be described as a 'sub-body'.[72]

The other way of looking at this matter is to say that Greeks, among many other cultures, when imagining their gods as manifesting themselves in anthropomorphic shapes, simply objectified the 'other'—the non-human or the superhuman—and familiarized it by describing it in finite and accessible terms. If Greek men were *βροτοί* and *θνητοί*, then Greek gods had to be *ἄμβροτοι* and *ἀθάνατοι*, but otherwise similar enough to humans to be depicted as such in their iconographical, cultic, and theatrical representations.[73] Vernant identifies a paradox in defining the 'other' by negating two characteristically human qualities, namely the need for food and the inevitability of death. But it is hardly paradoxical

[69] Noble herdsman: *Od.* 13.221–3; beautiful woman: 13.289–90.

[70] More on this topic in chapter 7.

[71] This dynamic interplay between the body of the man and the body of the god is reflected in our difficulty to distinguish between the young and beautiful men and women and the young and beautiful gods and goddesses except by depending wholly on their attributes. For more on the dangers entailed in this close and often problematic relationship between the self-image of the human viewer and the body image of the divinity viewed, see Steiner (2001, 45ff.).

[72] Vernant (1991, 41ff.).

[73] Vernant (1991, 47) on cultic activities as presupposing incorporation of the divine, and Pucci (1994, 17) on the necessity of on-stage anthropomorphic representations of the gods. For more on mimesis as the common link between the theatrical and the cultic scenes see my discussion in the next section, 'Enacted epiphany'.

for a culture and a people to construct the unfamiliar, on the one hand, by negating some of the most fundamental negative qualities of the familiar, i.e. hunger and death, and on the other hand, by exaggerating positive qualities such as beauty, youth, radiance, and so on. Divine epiphanies in general, and anthropomorphic epiphanies in particular, become means of negotiating limitations and boundaries imposed on humans by their ephemeral and fragile nature and overcome by the gods through their own superior nature. Divine epiphanies become, effectively, means of negotiating cultural identity.

ENACTED EPIPHANY: HUMANS PLAYING GODS

In the previous section we discussed narratives that involved anthropomorphic divine manifestations. Enacted epiphanies—and by this term I refer to epiphanies which involve humans impersonating divine beings in a cultic context—follow naturally in our discussion, since they too call attention to this dynamic interplay between the body of the gods and the body of their worshippers. The representational strategy whereby a human being (most commonly a member of the priestly personnel) is assimilated to the god or his statue as his facsimile and the living embodiment of his power is attested in both Greek art and cult from Archaic times onwards.[74] In fact, enacted epiphanies are already attested in the Bronze Age.[75]

Narratives that report enacted epiphanies mainly emphasize the ambivalence between the body of the god and that of certain humans of special age, physique, and sociopolitical status. Throughout the Greek-speaking world this blurring of boundaries between the god and his human facsimile is most clearly reflected in the prerequisites for one to become a priest or a priestess of a deity. In a number of cults the members of the priestly personnel were intentionally made to resemble the deity's most popular anthropomorphic image.[76]

The priest of Ismenian Apollo at Thebes, for instance, was selected from a noble family on the basis of his exceptional personal strength and beauty. According to Pausanias, the priest was assimilated to the god and his statue both by his exceptional beauty and by shared iconographic attributes: laurel branch, youthful appearance, and long hair, bound by crown or fillets streaming down over his shoulders.[77] Apollo's priest at Thebes took the cult title of Apollo 'the Laurel Bearer' (*Δαφνηφόρος*), and enacted the part of the god in his major festival. In an analogous fashion, in Aigion the priest of Zeus in his boyhood (*Ζεὺς παῖς*) was

[74] Cf. Tanner (2001, 264) on the problems of identifying whether a statue represents a deity or his/her priest or priestess.

[75] Helga Reusch (1958, 334–5), for instance, has shown that the north wall of the Throne Room at Knossos could serve as scenery for an enacted epiphany. For more on Bronze Age epiphanies see Gesell (1983), (1987), Hägg (1983), Marinatos (1993). More examples and detailed discussion on what is called here 'enacted epiphany' in particular and on the phenomenon of ritual impersonation in general in Versnel (1970, 84ff.), Bérard (1989, 95ff.), Burkert (2004), and Connelly (2007).

[76] This image may vary in different times and places, even in different cults current in the same time and place.

[77] Paus. 9.10.4 with Frazer's commentary ad loc. Cf. Tanner (2001, 264) and *LIMC* Apollo 31.

selected again from the most beautiful boys. He was allowed to keep the priesthood until the days of his puberty; when his own beard started growing, he would no longer look like the popularized image of Zeus in his boyhood, and another boy would have to take his place.[78]

My final example for this process of physical assimilation of the priestly personnel to the popularized image of the deity comes from the festival of Hermes the Ram-bearer (*Ἑρμοῦ κριοφόρου*) in Tanagra, where the youth judged to be the most handsome makes his way around the walls carrying a ram on his shoulders. Thus in an annual ritual, the young priest re-enacts Hermes' first advent, when the god averted a pestilence of the city by carrying a ram on his shoulders round the walls.[79] In this last-mentioned case reported by Pausanias, we also hear that the famous sculptor Kalamis immortalized the god's salutary intervention by creating a statue that depicted the god as a naked youth carrying a ram on his shoulders.[80] We can easily visualize the time of the festival, when both the god's sculptural facsimile and his human one would invoke in the mind of the worshippers the first corporeal manifestation of the tutelary god in their city. Visual mirroring between the human facsimile of the god and his sculptural duplicate was also attested in the festival that took place in honour of Apollo Daphnēphoros; while in Aigion, the priest of Zeus as a youth was assimilated to the statue of the youthful god. In all of the aforementioned narratives one thing is clear (an issue we discussed earlier in reference to the passages from Sosibios and Pausanias): the relationship between anthropomorphic representation of the divine either in myth or in cult and the anthropomorphic statues of the Greek gods and goddesses is one characterized by interdependence and mutual exchange.

Evidence for the close association, or rather for the identification, between the priest of a deity and the deity itself in a cultic context is also provided by Strabo's description of Alexander's visit to the oracle of Ammon.[81] Strabo either quotes or paraphrases Callisthenes' work on Alexander. The most interesting part of the narrative is the one that describes the process with which the king was declared Ammon Zeus' son. In this particular oracle, unlike the ones at Delphi and Didyma, 'the priest of the god acted out the part of the god' (*τοῦ προφήτου τὸν Δία ὑποκριναμένου*) and the oracle was given not in words, 'but for the most part with nods and signs' (*νεύμασι καὶ συμβόλοις*). Now, the interpretation of the participle *ὑποκριναμένου* (or *ὑποκρινομένου*, an easy emendation that some editors prefer) may become problematic, if we bring into the discussion two other narratives by Diodorus and Quintus Curtius that have Zeus' *xoanon* as the main focus of the divination process.[82] The *xoanon* of the god was carried about in a 'gilded ship' by eighty bearers and the movements of the *xoanon*'s head were interpreted by the priests as the answers to the questions posed. *Neuma*

[78] Paus. 7.24.4 with Bremmer (1999). [79] Paus. 9.22.1–2.

[80] The statue that Kalamis created was reproduced on Tanagran coins. See Levi (1979, 353, fig. 22) and Larson (2007, 148–9).

[81] Strabo 15.1.43 = *FGrHist* 124 F14a. Notwithstanding the textual difficulties, the meaning of the passage is clear: the priestly personnel of the oracle took pains to secure Alexander's favour by declaring him Zeus' son and treating him accordingly. Cf. Fredricksmeyer (1991). On Strabo and his sources see Bosworth (2003).

[82] Diod. Sic. 17.50.6–7; Curt. 4.7.23–4. A detailed discussion of these two passages can be found in the '*Effigies* epiphany' section below.

('nod') is the word used both by Strabo and Diodorus. If this is what Callisthenes meant, then it is possible that the participle *ὑποκριναμένου* means that the priest was interpreting the movements of the divine *xoanon*, not that he was dressed as the god giving nods and signs and the occasional clear speech.[83] In either case, once again the enacted and the sculptural form of a divine manifestation are preserved as equal and interchangeable variants of the same epiphany in different narratives. A comparable example of the identification of members of the priestly personnel with the deity in a divinatory context may be found in a passage from Euripides' *Orestes*, where Glaukos, Nereus' prophet (*προφήτης*), is characterized as an infallible god when he suddenly manifests himself amidst the sea waves in front of Menelaus and delivers a prophecy.[84] The identification between the priest and his god in a divinatory context is taken one step further in this passage: the priest becomes the god.

This triple process of morphological assimilation of members of priesthood to both the popular anthropomorphic image of the gods and their cult statue was not restricted to male deities and their priests. Herodotus speaks of a festival of a Libyan virginal deity, whom he identifies with Athena. In the course of the festival in honour of that Libyan Athena—the festival may be a Libyan one but I am looking at its *interpretatio Graeca*—the fairest of the local virgins is made to look like the deity by putting on a Corinthian helmet and Greek panoply. She then mounts on a chariot and gets drawn in a ceremonial procession across the Tritonian lake.[85] Similarly in Patras during the annual festival of Artemis Laphria, her virgin priestess gets dressed so as to evoke visually the virginal goddess by riding on a deer-yoked chariot;[86] whilst in Pellene the virgin priestess of Athena not only used to be dressed in the full attire of the goddess on special ritual occasions, but she was even mistaken for the goddess herself in the course of a military crisis, when the city was besieged by the Aitolians.[87] Polyaenus' text also lays added emphasis on the assimilation of the priestess to the goddess, not only with regard to her costume, but also with regard to her exceptional beauty and stature.[88]

To be sure, the priestess who was mistaken for Athena was not simply dressed like the goddess; she was also as tall and as beautiful as the virginal goddess herself or at least as she was thought to have been. Interestingly enough, Plutarch's account of the same siege preserves a slightly different version of the story: it was not a most beautiful and tall priestess of Athena that was mistaken for the goddess, but a common girl of striking beauty and remarkable height, who happened to be sitting in the sanctuary of Artemis.[89] The girl, having been

[83] Nevertheless, the latter interpretation becomes weaker in view of the adverb clearly (*ῥητῶς*), which does not leave much room for intermediary interpretations and does not cast any doubts on Alexander's divine lineage. Cf. here Strabo 7.3.11 where the verb *ὑποκρίνομαι* refers once again to divination without specifying the exact divinatory process.

[84] Eur. *Or*. 364–5.Glaukos was Nereus' prophet who later became a god himself.

[85] Hdt. 4.180. [86] Paus. 7.18.7.

[87] See my discussion in chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?'. Cf. also Platt (2011, 17–20).

[88] Polyaen. 8.59 with Frazer's commentary ad loc. (1897, 187). Cf. also Pritchett (1979, 35) and Platt (2011, 18–19).

[89] Plut. *Arat*. 32.13. I discuss the same two passages in the '*Effigies* epiphany' and '*Phasma* epiphany' sections below.

given a three-crested helmet to wear, rushed out to view the tumult of the battle. As she stood there in front of the gates of the sanctuary dressed like the belligerent virginal goddess, she was mistaken for Artemis herself. The enemy was struck with amazement and terror. Plutarch's version preserves the stratagematic dimension of the episode, but instead of toning it down by discussing it against a background of ritual expectations and cultic conventions, he accentuates it by stripping it down to its structural components: the human facsimile of the goddess was not her priestess: it was just a beautiful tall virgin. Both in crisis and cult, a human visually assimilated to the popular image of a deity could be perceived as a corporeal manifestation of the deity itself.

The minimum that can be established from the epiphanic narratives discussed above is that a priest or a priestess could impersonate a deity and that this representational strategy was a cultural topos among the Greeks, especially when it came to the ceremonial representation of the divine, i.e. representing the divine in the cultic contexts of festivals, processions, sacrifices, etc. An exploration of the very same cultural topos is to be found in Anthia and Callirhoe, the heroines of Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* and Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* respectively, who are treated as the human duplicates of Artemis and Aphrodite on a large number of secular—some of which are of a stratagematic nature—and sacred occasions.[90] In either case, the girls' beauty and youth, two paramount hallmarks of divinity, provide the visual link to the two virginal goddesses and prepare the ground for the conceptual identification between the two in the mind of their synchronic audience, a mixture of religious devotees and bystanders.

Familiarity with ritual impersonation is also suggested by a number of narratives that I discuss in chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?': such as Phye's embodiment of Athena—an integral element of Peisistratus' scheme—and Aristomenes' impersonation of one of the Dioscuri.[91] If the Greeks were not culturally familiar with the representational strategy whereby a mortal is visually made to resemble the popular image of an immortal by means of imitating its physique and divine paraphernalia, then it would not have been possible for the tall and beautiful Phye to be the leading light in Peisistratus' staging of his own advent festival; and it would have simply been impossible for Aristomenes and his friend (or Gonippos and Panormos in Pausanias' version of the story) to dress up like the twin gods—popular iconographical modes depicted Dioscuri wearing their *piloi* or stars on their heads and riding on white horses—and stage a performance that was perceived by their enemies as the twin gods appearing in the flesh.[92] Note here that in both narratives the emphasis is on the fact that the Spartans were celebrating the annual festival in

[90] E.g. Anthia: Xen. *Ephes.* 1.2.2–7 and 1.12.1. In both passages Anthia has people prostrating themselves in front of her. Callirhoe: Char. *Chaer & Call.* 1.1.16; 1.14.1–2 (Theron's stratagem); 2.2.6 (Callirhoe's *effigies* epiphany); and esp. 2.3.5–6. Both heroines become the object of ritual προσκύνησις on more than one occasion; for Callirhoe see esp. 1.1.16; 2.3.9; 3.2.14, etc.

[91] Phye: Hdt. 1.60 (the passage is translated and discussed in detail in chapter 3); Aristomenes: Polyaen. 2.31.4 Woelfflin & Melber.

[92] Paus. 4.27.1–3. Dioscuri as twin riders: fig. 7.1 and A. B. Cook (1914, 760–75, esp. 761–2 and figs 554, 555). Cf. also *LIMC* III 577, *Dioscuri* no. 115.

honour of the gods.[93] It is exactly this festive, emotionally charged atmosphere that raises the viewers' expectations and hunger for a divine epiphany. However, it is the cultural practice of ritual impersonation that makes it possible for both the Athenians and the Spartans to conceptualize Phye as Athena and Aristomenes as one of Zeus' sons, to *look* at two human beings and *see* two divine ones.[94]

Most importantly, familiarity with ritual impersonation made it possible for the gods and heroes of Greek tragedy and comedy to migrate from the cultic scene to the theatrical one and manifest themselves in flesh and blood before the eyes of their enchanted audience.[95] This sort of familiarity with ritual impersonation enabled the audience to watch actors impersonating Athena in *Rhesus*, Herakles in *Alcestis*, Lyssa and Iris in *Hercules Furiens*, Athena in *Ajax*, Athena and the Furies in the *Oresteia*, Apollo in *Ion*, Athena in the fragmentary *Ajax Locros*, Herakles and Dionysus in *Frogs*, and even Pan in Menander's *Dyskolos*.[96] Above all, Dionysus in the *Bacchae* epitomizes the culturally inherited fusion between the cultic and the theatrical scenes, when he addresses the audience by saying, 'I Dionysus, son of Zeus, have come to this Theban land having assumed the likeness of a man.' An actor, who impersonates a deity, appears on the theatrical stage to dramatize the god's original epiphany to the city of Thebes, a theme that in all probability must have featured in the local festivals in honour of the city's tutelary deity. This is the moment that ritual and theatre, cultic and theatrical *skēnē*, become one.

An inscription from the second century AD (*c.*178), most commonly referred to as 'The Rule of the Iobacchoi', gives evidence for dramatic re-enacting of sacred myths (perhaps of the god's first advent?) as part of the rituals of the all-male Athenian thiasos.[97] Here we remain in the grey area between theatre and ritual. The text was found at the thiasos' meeting place and contains the administrative framework of their Bacchic association, as well as a lengthy account of their social and religious activities. Among their other practices, they used to stage sacred dramas featuring their patron deities: Dionysus, Kore, Palaemon, Aphrodite, Proteurythmos. Apparently, the members of the group were each assigned by lot a specific part to play and, dressed as each of the deities mentioned above, were expected to 'say and act [their] allotted part with all good order and quietness' under the priest's directions. What differentiates the members of this Bacchic thiasos from the audience of a theatrical production is the degree of their empathy with the dramatized events. The Iobacchoi, in particular, and the members of private religious associations, in general, were not mere spectators; on the contrary, they actively participated and they fully shared the experiences of the divine characters they impersonated, and thus perhaps felt closer to the divine presence.

[93] In Pausanias' version the festivities take place in the enemy's camp. So what we have here is a combination of a cultic and crisis context.

[94] More on ritual visuality and its power to alter visual perception in Elsner (2000) and (2007), Kindt (2012, 36–54), and Petridou (2013).

[95] On the dynamic interplay between ritual and literary drama, see Nielsen (2000) and Sourvinou-Inwood (2003b).

[96] On Athena's epiphany in this play see Podlecki (1980, 45–86).

[97] *IG* II^2, 1368, 136–46 with Harland (2012, 81–2).

Since a priestess most commonly officiated for a goddess and a priest for a god, naturally enough, males were usually visually assimilated to male deities and females to female deities. There are, however, some rather interesting exceptions to this rule: the priest of Demeter Kidaria at Pheneos in Arcadia, for instance, is assimilated to the goddess by wearing the sacred mask of the goddess while performing the mystery rites in her honour.[98] More specifically, during the 'major' initiation, the priest wears on his face the mask of Demeter Kidaria, which he has taken from the higher part of the *Petrōma*, and strikes with rods the inhabitants of the netherworld.[99] This instance of a male priest impersonating a female goddess with the help of a mask—an accessory largely associated with dramatic performances—is most striking. But then, mimesis is an element common to both theatrical and cultic scenes.[100] Another example where the assimilation of a man to Demeter (or Kore?) involves an element of cross-dressing is attested by Plutarch: in a strange oath-taking ceremony at Syracuse, the person who takes the oath is required to visit the sanctuary of the Thesmophoroi and visually assimilate himself to Demeter (or Kore?) by dressing himself in the goddess's purple robe and holding a blazing torch in his hand.[101]

The common denominator in all the examples discussed above is the ease with which the conceptual identification between god or goddess and his priest or her priestess is achieved in the eyes of the spectators, which accordingly means that, in certain contexts, the Greeks were willing to see a god on the face of a human who has been visually assimilated to a deity's popularized image. This appears to be especially true when it came to high-ranking members of the priestly personnel. But why is this so? The answer, or at least a big part of it, lies, I think, in the idea that the gods themselves were likely to choose a functional anthropomorphic guise, as shown in the previous section. What, then, could be more functional and facilitating than acquiring the physical likeness of the members of their priesthood in a cultic context?

This representational strategy is widely exploited on the Athenian theatrical stage: Aeschylus had Hera appear on stage disguised as her own priestess (*Ἥραν ἠλλοιωμένην, ὡς ἱέρειαν ἀγείρουσαν*);[102] whilst Euripides made his Dionysus manifest, both in the eyes of the characters and his audience, in the likeness of his priest.[103] Pentheus, of course, interrogates a god disguised as his own priest; however, this does not preclude the possibility that the dramatist here plays upon

[98] Paus. 8.15.3: *καὶ ἐπίθημα ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ περιφερές ἐστιν, ἔχον ἐντὸς Δήμητρος πρόσωπον Κιδαρίας· τοῦτο ὁ ἱερεὺς περιθέμενος τὸ πρόσωπον ἐν τῇ μείζονι καλουμένῃ τελετῇ ῥάβδοις κατὰ λόγον δή τινα τοὺς ὑποχθονίους παίει*. Jost (2003, 156) discusses this passage most pertinently.

[99] According to Pausanias, the *petrōma* consisted of two large stones fitted one to the other and contained the sacred writings for the mysteries.

[100] Cf. also Bérard (1974, 93): 'Enfin, entre la représentation religieuse et la représentation théâtrale, les cloisons ne sont guère étanches.'

[101] Plut. *Dion* 56.5: *αἱ δ᾽ ἠξίουν αὐτὸν ὀμόσαι τὸν μέγαν ὅρκον. ἦν δὲ τοιοῦτος· καταβὰς εἰς τὸ τῶν Θεσμοφόρων τέμενος ὁ διδοὺς τὴν πίστιν, ἱερῶν τινων γενομένων, περιβάλλεται τὴν πορφυρίδα τῆς θεοῦ καὶ λαβὼν δᾷδα καιομένην ἀπόμνυσι*.

[102] Aesch. Fr. 168 Radt = 355 Mette = Pl. *Resp*. 381.d.2. The fragment is attributed to *Xantriae* (by Radt) or *Semele* (by Latte). More on this problem in Mette's review of the third volume of *TrGF* in *Gnomon* 58 (1986), p. 592. In either case we are dealing with a cultic drama.

[103] Eur. *Bacch*. 465ff.

his audience's culturally inherited views on the dynamic interplay between the god and his human facsimile and their ritual identification as a prerequisite for many ritual actions.[104]

The annual ritual of the *hieros gamos* as practised between the Athenian Basilinna and Dionysus may also be relevant here: the view that it was the god who was impersonated by his priest in the annual festival seems even more plausible in view of the many examples discussed above that attest the ritual identification between the deity and his or her priest/priestess. Further support for Dionysus' priest impersonating the god is given by a text from Plutarch where Ariadne, when brought to Naxos, moves in and lives together with Onarus, who was indeed Dionysus' priest.[105] This ritual identification between a priest and a priestess and the deity they officiate for is also attested by other erotic epiphanies. For example, Zeus rapes Io, who at that point happened to be Hera's priestess (*ταύτην ἱερωσύνην τῆς Ἥρας ἔχουσαν Ζεὺς ἔφθειρε*);[106] so in a sense Zeus makes love to his wife's human double. Herakles impregnated Timosthenes' wife, while her husband was serving the god as his priest (or could we say that Herakles is entitled to sleep with the wife of his human duplicate?).[107]

To conclude, in this and the previous sections I have argued that many of the epiphanic narratives considered here comment on a certain ambiguity and simultaneously a dynamic interplay between the body of the mortal and the body of the immortal. Furthermore, it is possible that this ambiguity, so eloquently and extensively explored in myth, would have found its cultic counterpart in the representational strategy whereby humans are iconographically assimilated to the popular image of a deity and effectively embody the deity in certain cultic contexts. Now in a number of the narratives discussed above there was an unmistaken effort to visually assimilate the human facsimile to not simply the popular image of the deity—as articulated in mythic narratives, hymns and so on—but also to the deity's cult statue. In the next section I develop this idea further and examine the ways in which deities were perceived to manifest themselves in the form of their statues.

EFFIGIES EPIPHANY: GODS IN THE FORM OF THEIR CULT IMAGES

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to think of all statues as the living embodiment of the divine. In the Suda we read about a man who could tell the difference by natural talent: Heraiskos could apparently distinguish between living and non-living divine statues (*αὐτοφυὴς ἐγένετο διαγνώμων τῶν τε ζώντων καὶ τῶν μὴ ζώντων ἱερῶν ἀγαλμάτων*).[108] As soon as he laid eyes on a living cult statue, we are

[104] A kind of cultural baggage, I suppose, that we lack in our interpretation of the text today.

[105] Plut. *Thes.* 20.1.

[106] Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.1.3.

[107] Paus. 6.11.2: *ἀλλὰ ἱερᾶσθαι μὲν Ἡρακλεῖ τὸν Τιμοσθένην Θασίῳ, τοῦ Θεαγένους δὲ τῇ μητρὶ Ἡρακλέους συγγενέσθαι φάσμα ἐοικὸς Τιμοσθένει.*

[108] Suda II 579, 7; II 52, 23 s.vv. *Ἡραΐσκος* and *διαγνώμων*.

told, he would feel and behave like a man possessed by some god. In the absence of expertise of the calibre of Heraiskos, the present section argues that the issue of whether the cult statue of a Greek deity could be perceived as the present god, as *deus manifestus ac praesens*, depended very much on the viewers' intentions, expectations, cultural references, and psychological preconditioning. Epiphanies occur in the eyes of the beholder.[109] It is in the eyes of the beholder that a cult statue of a deity is transformed into the living form of the deity. As in the case of any viewing experience, much depends on the situational context of the viewing, i.e. whether it takes place in a moment of crisis or as part of a religious festival, etc.

More precisely, our sources seem to point to the following rule of thumb. The cult statue of a deity was indeed perceived as a form of epiphany: a) when it was thought of as animated by the gods and thus endowed with the power of speech, movement, and emotional expression (here belong the multitude of examples of weeping, talking, walking, etc. statues); b) when animated by the expectations of its beholders in the appropriate ritual or crisis context (more examples to follow); and finally, c) when the imagistic representation of the deity posed the same challenges and the same dangers for the viewers as his or her corporeal manifestation.

Looser links between the god and its cult statue can also be traced in: i) narratives about statues in chains, ii) narratives that relate the punishment of the impious who abuse the cult statue of the god (such as the theodicy story about Mithridates and his barbarian army abusing the ancient and much revered wooden *xoanon* of Delian Apollo), and iii) narratives that unfold the miraculous discovery of a statue, often prompted by vivid prophetic dream visions (such as the discovery of the *xoanon* of Thetis by Leandris or that of the *agalmata* of Demeter and Kore). A good example of a fettered statue is that of the chained statue of Apollo at Tyre: just before Alexander's attack, Apollo threatens to abandon the city. In their attempt to prevent the god's departure, the people of Tyre nail or chain the god's *xoanon* to its base using cords or chains of gold.[110]

Cult statues animated by the gods

The earliest instance of an *effigies* epiphany, of an 'agalmatophany', is to be found in the sixth book of the *Iliad*.[111] The priestess Theano lays a fair robe on the knees of the statue of Athena and vows luxurious sacrificial offerings in exchange for Diomedes' death. 'Thus she spoke in her prayer, but Pallas Athena made signs of refusal' (Ὣς ἔφατ' εὐχομένη, ἀνένευε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη) (311). Matz has most

[109] More on this issue of ensouled and animated cult images in Koch-Piettre (2001), Johnston (2008), Platt (2011, 77–123), and Kindt (2012, 155–89).

[110] Wooden *xoanon* of Delian Apollo: Paus. 3.23.4–6; *xoanon* of Thetis by Leandris: Paus. 3.14.4; *agalmata* of Demeter and Kore: Paus. 8.37.3–4. Both discoveries were prompted by a dream vision, κατὰ ὄψιν ὀνείρατος. The story of the fettered statue of Apollo at Tyre is to be found in different versions in Diod. Sic. 17.41.7–8; Plut. *Alex*. 24.5–8; and Quintus Curtius Rufus 4.3.21–2.

[111] *Il.* 6.297–31. The term was invented by Steiner (2001) to match the attested theophany or hierophany.

convincingly argued that the statue of Athena becomes the goddess.[112] The Greek implies that the statue of the goddess threw her head back in token of denial.[113] Episodes like these involving images moving, talking, kneeling, weeping, etc. abound in Greek authors from Homer and Herodotus to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, and Pausanias. And yet it is not difficult to see why Aristarchus would have been so challenged by the notion of a moving statue so as to athetize the line. The Greeks, albeit familiar with the representational strategy of living divine statues, seem to have been no less challenged by it: with very few exceptions our sources speak invariably of bewildered bystanders and perplexed onlookers. The spectacle of animated inorganic matter was apparently easy on the eyes, but hard on the intellect of even the most experienced of the viewers.

To be sure, the Homeric text does not specify whether it was the goddess herself who nodded with disapproval or her statue. This issue is closely related to a wider problem: the Greek language as a whole does not distinguish between the deity and his or her statue. In fact, the Greek word for god or goddess, *theos*, can successfully describe both.[114] The same term can also be applied to both iconic and aniconic images—in fourth-century inventories the aniconic *xoana* of Hera in Samos and Athena Polias are both referred to as ἡ θεός—a fact that supports my thesis that anthropomorphism may have been a form of divine representation (no doubt prevalent in certain generic and situational contexts), but was, by no means, the only one.[115]

Another informative comment on the controversy that surrounded the issue of the identification of the deity with its cult statue is to be found in the *Interpretationes graecae* of Camillus' treatment of the statue of Juno Regina: having sacked the city of Veii, Camillus was keen on removing the statue of Hera from her temple and taking it with him back to Rome. As part of the Roman ritual of *evocatio*, Camillus performed the appropriate sacrifices, prayed to the goddess and then asked the statue of the goddess if she approved of her being moved to Rome. The statue replied in human voice that she did.[116] In the same passage (6.2), Plutarch proceeds to inform us of Livy's reservations concerning the veracity of the event:[117]

> Livy says that Camillus while touching the statue of the goddess (ἁπτόμενον τῆς θεοῦ) prayed and besought her, but in fact it was some of the people present who actually replied that she wishes indeed to be removed and concedes to that request and that she would gladly follow Camillus.

[112] Matz (1958, 437); contra Dietrich (1997, 5).
[113] Cf. *Il.* 6.311 and 22.205; *Od.* 9.468; Hdt. 5.51; Ar. *Lys.*126.
[114] Gordon (1979, 7–8); Romano (1980, 2–3).
[115] Steiner (2001, 135).
[116] Plut. *Cam.* 6.1–6.
[117] Cf. also Livy (5.22.3–7), who emphasizes the sanctity of the statue by drawing attention to the fact that only a certain priest was allowed to touch it. According to Livy, it was one of the youths that were sent to carry the statue that asked the goddess the following question: 'Visne Romam ire, Juno?' And it was the crowd that cried that the statue had nodded yes. Interestingly enough, although in his *Camillus* 6.1–6 Plutarch indirectly attacks Livy for his incredulity and lack of open-mindedness concerning sacred matters, in his *Coriolanus* 37.3 he deals with an issue of analogous nature with an even greater degree of scepticism.

To minimize the element of incredulity at a talking statue in his account of the events, Dionysius of Halicarnassus has it that the statue was asked twice about her removal and that twice she repeated her reply.[118]

Plutarch and Dionysius of Halicarnassus inform us of yet another talking statue, that of Fortuna Mulieribus or Tyche Gynaikeia. When the women of Rome were rewarded for their contribution to the war against the Volscians by being offered money to build a temple and a statue to the Fortune of married women, they thought it appropriate to establish a second statue of the goddess built with money they had gathered themselves. This second statue when placed in the temple uttered the following words: 'Women, you have dedicated me according to a custom dear to the gods.'[119] Both sources report that the statue repeated these words and pious Dionysius appears to be convinced of the veracity of the report.[120] Dionysius' narrative is also of great significance for an additional reason: the statue epiphany of Tyche Gynaekeia is explicitly characterized as an *epiphaneia* of the goddess: *τὴν γενομένην ἐπιφάνειαν τῆς θεοῦ*. This passage clearly shows that we are not stretching our definition of an epiphany by including talking or moving, etc. statues in our discussion. Statues that were attributed living qualities like speech or movement were already thought of as epiphanies in the Graeco-Roman world.[121] In Plutarch's case, on the other hand, the episode is reported and embedded within a wider discourse of problematic sensorial perception of the divine. The latter author also reports many other instances of statue epiphanies—statues were said to have been sweating, shedding tears, and even bleeding—but soon enough he dismisses them as typical examples of self-suggestion, wistful piety, and psychological preconditioning.[122]

A number of examples of animated statues, this time in conjunction with oracular deities or simply oracular responses, feature prominently also in Diodorus Siculus and Pausanias. The first author accounts for the highly ornamental oracular statue of Zeus Ammon, who provided answers to anyone who posed a question in the course of a procession with extra emphasis given on the route of the procession, which was not prearranged, but instead indicated by the divine

[118] Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 13.3.2. An interesting variant of the same episode is reported by Valerius Maximus (1.8.3): the soldiers who carried the statue thought that they were carrying not simply the statue of the goddess, but the goddess herself, who had come down from the sky! For more detailed treatment of these narratives, see Motsiou (1996, 39–40). I am indebted to Peter Wiseman for this bibliographical reference.

[119] Plut. *Coriol.* 37.4: *θεοφιλεῖ με θεσμῷ γυναῖκες δεδώκατε*. In Val. Max. 1.8.4 we find the Latin version: *rite me matronae, dedistis riteque dedicastis*.

[120] Dion. Hal. 8.56.3.

[121] Cf. Lucian *Syr. D.* 10 with parallels of Syrian *xoana* that sweat, move, and provide oracular responses (*ἰδρώει γὰρ δὴ ὧν παρὰ σφίσι τὰ ξόανα καὶ κινέεται καὶ χρησμηγορέει, καὶ βοὴ δὲ πολλάκις ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ νηῷ κλεισθέντος τοῦ ἱροῦ, καὶ πολλοὶ ἤκουσαν*). Amongst them one could mention the singing statue of Memnon and Apollo's statue in Atargatis' temple at the Syrian city of Bambyke (Hieropolis). The statue could apparently move on its throne, when possessed by the spirit of the god. No less curious is Hera's *xoanon* (*Syr. D.* 32), which looked people right in the face if they stood right opposite it, whilst its gaze followed the spectators around.

[122] Plut. *Coriol.* 38.4–7. Cf. also 37.3–38.7, where a rationalistic explanation of talking statues is offered: it is possible that some *agalmata* may emit a sound like a moan or a groan due to an internal fracture or a rupture. The possibility, however, of inanimate objects articulating speech and holding conversations is altogether dismissed as feeble and absurd.

statue's nodding his head.[123] The second recounts the oracular statue of Hermes Agoraios ('of the market place') at Pherai in Achaia: from the afternoon onwards worshippers would approach the statue of the god and, having performed sacrifices, burnt incense, and paid a small amount of money, would whisper their questions into the ears of the god or, rather, his statue.[124] After that they would cover their ears and run away from the market place. Having gone a good distance, they would remove their hands and the first words they would hear would be the god's response to their questions.

In fact, Hermes occupies a prominent place among the gods whose statues were thought to be animated. More crucially, the epiphanic narratives that focus on Hermes' *effigies* epiphany come to us not from Imperial periegetic texts, ethnographical literature, and paradoxography, but from fifth- and fourth-century Attic drama. Some of them may have been ad hoc comic inventions; even so, they seem to be exploiting deep-rooted beliefs about Hermes' potentially expressing his will by means of an *effigies* epiphany. Several characters of Classical Athenian comedy are presented on stage as talking to iconic or semi-iconic statues of Hermes, also known as herms. In a fragmentary comic play by Plato Comicus, for instance, a wooden statue of Hermes is presented as having walked and arrived on stage of its own accord;[125] while in Phrynichus' account of the violation of the herms by Alcibiades and his gang, one of the herms is endowed with voice and responds to the Chorus (?) of the play.[126] In Aristophanes' *Peace*, Hermes in person (that is as a *dramatis persona*) has a passionate discussion with the statue of Peace that lies on stage;[127] while in *Clouds* (1473ff.) Strepsiades opens a conversation with the herm that represents the old world order which has already been discredited and therefore abandoned. In these last mentioned examples, we do not actually hear the voice of the statues, but Strepsiades pauses to listen to Hermes' reply and answers back, as is clearly indicated in the Greek text; and so does Hermes, who puts his ear to Peace's mouth to listen to her reply. In Aristophanes' *Peace* the audience can only infer that the statue speaks from Hermes' and Trygaios' reactions; but they can clearly see it turning its head away in disgust when Hyperbolus' name is mentioned.[128]

Further examples of statues that were said to have averted their eyes or closed them to avoid looking upon some blasphemous deed committed in their presence are found not only the comic, but also the tragic stage. The reader may be reminded of the cult statue of Artemis in Tauris, who averts her eyes when confronted with the polluted Orestes and Pylades,[129] or the *diopetes* Palladion, who has an analogous reaction when confronted with Cassandra's rape by Ajax, or the statue of Athena Ilias, who also looks away when confronted with the sacrilegious removal of the suppliants from its vicinity.[130] In these cases of *effigies* epiphany, the statue of a deity is perceived not only as possessing the abilities of

[123] Diod. Sic. 17.50.7: *οὗτοι δ' ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων φέροντες τὸν θεὸν προάγουσιν αὐτομάτως ὅποι ποτ' ἂν ἄγῃ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ νεῦμα τὴν πορείαν.*

[124] Paus. 7.22.2–3. Once again, the Greek *θεός* does not distinguish between the two.

[125] Plat. Com. fr. 204 K-A.

[126] Phrynichus Com. fr. 61 K-A = Plut. *Alc.* 20.7.

[127] Cf. Ar. *Pax* 661 and 682–3.

[128] Ar. *Pax*. 679–84. On how this scene would have been staged see Sommerstein ad loc.

[129] Eur. *IT* 1157–67.

[130] Strabo 6.1.14.

movement, speech, and emotional expression, but also as sharing the same ethical principles and values with the deity it represented.[131] It goes without saying that these moral guidelines were also embraced by the community of contemporary viewers.

But how can a statue look away? This is indeed the most impressive feature of these *effigies* epiphanies: how body-conscious some of these cult statues appear to be when imagined as vehicles of divine presence. In a number of the aforementioned narratives these material, inorganic representations of the divine (in some cases even thick and heavy sculptures made out of marble or stone) appear, not only invested with the power of mobility, but also with the power to use non-verbal means of communication (such as sign and body language) easily decipherable by eyewitnesses. Both statues of Eirenē and Artemis in the passages mentioned above, for instance, express their disapproval not by means of verbal communication, but by averting their face away from the bystanders (*ἀποστρέφεται . . . ἀπεστράφη*).[132] The use of non-verbal language adds extra pathos to both scenes. The reader is also reminded at this point of Athena's agalmatophany—the first *effigies* epiphany attested in Greek literature—and her throwing her head back to signify refusal (*ἀνένευε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη*). The same verb is used several centuries later by Aristides, the famous Mysian orator of the second century AD, to describe an encounter with an extremely body-conscious statue of Asclepius: the god orders the rest of his worshippers to go by a nod of his head (*νεύει ἔξοδον ὁ θεὸς*) and commands Aristides to stay by extending his hand (*καὶ ὁ θεός μοι τῇ χειρὶ προδείκνυσι μένειν*).[133] In all cases the divine appears to share the same cultural assumptions with the community of devotees and makes use of shared semiology, which is therefore effortlessly deciphered by the audience.

In other cases, the body-consciousness of these *effigies* epiphanies has a rather startling effect on both the internal perceiver and the reader of these narratives. The epiphany, for example, of the running statue of the Mother of the gods to Pindar in the course of a music class with Olympichos the *aulos* player, which was accompanied by fire and loud noise, begs for further deciphering and explanation duly provided by the Delphic oracle.[134] Why would a statue of the Mother of the gods made of stone appear to be running and spreading its legs (*Μητρὸς θεῶν ἄγαλμα λίθινον τοῖς ποσὶν ἐπερχόμενον*), if it wasn't for the urgent need for a sanctuary and mysteric rites in honour of the goddess to be established?

Effigies epiphanies took place not only in waking reality but in dreams too. And even when the gods did not appear in the form of their statues, they still looked like them, in the sense that they carried the same bodily physiognomy and attributes. When the Nymphs manifested themselves in the dreams of distressed

[131] For further examples see the relevant appendix in Donohue (1988). See also Poulsen (1945) for examples of Christian images that have been perceived as talking, moving, weeping, bleeding, crying, and weeping.

[132] On *ἀποστρέφομαι* meaning to 'turn one's face away from', 'to abandon', see Soph. *OC* 326 and 1272, Eur. *IT* 801, Xen. *Cyr*. 5.5.36.

[133] Aristid. 4.50–1 Keil.

[134] Schol. *ad* Pind. *Pyth*. 3.137b, p. 80.16 Drachmann. On the role of the Delphic oracle in deciphering and determing the Greek cultic realities, see Kindt (forthcoming).

Daphnis, they looked 'just like their statues' (*τοῖς ἀγάλμασιν ὅμοιαι*), i.e. like tall, beautiful, half-naked, barefoot women with their hair spread loose on their shoulders.[135] And Asclepius addresses Aristides having acquired the bodily image his worshippers were so familiar with from looking at his statues (*ἔχων ἤδη τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σχῆμα ἐν περ ἕστηκεν*).[136]

By the same token, Artemidorus of Ephesus, the ancient dream expert, reassures his readers that: 'seeing Zeus himself in the form that we have imagined him to be or seeing a statue of him in which he is wearing his usual attire is auspicious for a king or a rich man'.[137] The same holds true for Artemis, says Artemidorus: 'It makes no difference whether we see the goddess herself as we have imagined her to be or her statue.' Finally, Artemidorus informs us that the same principle applies to all the gods: whether one sees the god in the flesh or in the form of his/her statue is of no real significance; both forms of divine revelation carry the same significance and the same gravity (*ἐάν τε γὰρ σάρκινοι οἱ θεοὶ φαίνωνται ἐάν τε ὡς ἀγάλματα ἐξ ὕλης πεποιημένα, τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχουσι λόγον*). He adds, however, that if one dreams of the gods in person the positive or negative predictions will be fulfilled earlier than if one had dreamt of his or her statue. One way of interpreting this is to say that by the second century AD and in certain contexts—such as that of oneiric divination—and, of course, in certain authors, the statuary epiphanies of the divine were thought of as a slightly less effective and less direct medium of signifying divine presence. Yet such an interpretation seems to be easily assailable when confronted with the multitude of *effigies* epiphanies in healing contexts in general and in incubation contexts in particular, as the next narrative demonstrates.[138]

Suda preserves an anecdote regarding a statue of Asclepius that was not only invested with the power to speak and diagnose a medical condition, but also with the capacity to assess the effectiveness of a treatment he prescribed earlier, and modify it to suit the religious and dietary needs of the patient.[139] Two patients, Plutarch from Athens and Domninos from Syros, practised incubation at the temple of Asclepius in Athens. Both patients were prescribed a treatment which involved gorging on pork, but out of the two only Domninos complied with the divine orders, despite the fact that they contradicted his accustomed dietetic regime. The Athenian Plutarch protested vehemently against the lack of cultural differentiation and individualization and demanded an alternative diet. The narrative lays extra emphasis on the fact that whilst the original treatment was given in the course of a dream, it was contested while the patient was wide awake and vividly conversing with the architectural structure that decorated the forecourt of the temple: *ἀλλὰ διαναστὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου καὶ διαγκωνισάμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ σκίμποδος ἀποβλέπων εἰς τὸ ἄγαλμα τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ* (*καὶ γὰρ ἐτύγχανεν ἐγκαδεύδων τῷ προδόμῳ τοῦ ἱεροῦ*). Plutarch's wish was granted when Asclepius spoke from his statue with a melodious voice and gave him an alternative remedy for his affliction (*ὁ δὲ Ἀσκληπιὸς <ἰεὶς> αὐτίκα ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀγάλματος ἐμμελέστατον δή τινα φθόγγον, ἑτέραν ὑπεγράψατο θεραπείαν τῷ πάθει*).

[135] *Daphnis and Chloe* 2.23. [136] Aristid. *Or.* 4.50 Keil.
[137] Artem. 2.35. [138] More examples in chapter 3.
[139] Suda II 127, 29; II 52, 18 s.vv. *Δομνῖνος* and *διαγκωνισάμενος*.

Some intentional ambiguity may be detected in the prepositional structure *apo tou agalmatos*. Why would such a clarification be needed, if the identification of the corporeal manifestation of the god and his *effigies* epiphany was a given? Was it Asclepius himself in the form of his cult statue or some bystander who was perhaps hidden behind the divine image who imitated the god's voice and spoke instead? This is, after all, the same kind of problematics and dynamics we encountered in the aforementioned *effigies* epiphanies of Tyche Gynaikeia and Hera Basileia (Juno Regina). In the majority of the cases of *effigies* epiphany, however, it is difficult to tell with any degree of certainty where sanctimonious piety ended and where fraudulent manipulation of the believers' expectations began. The same amount of difficulty is also involved in determining whether the statuary representations of these healing deities were indeed temporarily inhabited by the gods themselves or were simply imagined *as such* by their spectators. The principal reason for this sort of complexity is the fact that in such contexts (such as that of healing and divination) interacting with the divine cult image was in fact the principal way of communicating with the divine.

In the next section I look further into the issue of differentiating between statues animated by the gods and statues animated by the expectations of the beholders and whether such a distinction is indeed a valid one to make on a synchronic level, i.e. as far as the original spectators were concerned.

Cult statues animated in the eyes of their beholders

This part of the discussion focuses on epiphany narratives that involve cult statues that become animated in the eyes of their beholders. Nowhere is this premise more applicable than in the so-called advent festivals, that is festivals that celebrated the seasonal return of a deity to a place, often referred to in our sources as the deity's ἐπιδημία or παρουσία.[140]

Perhaps the most renowned advent festival in Attica in which divine presence was denoted by the presence and the handling of the divine cult statue was that of Dionysus in his ship car, as depicted on vase paintings from the end of the sixth century onwards.[141] The preliminary rite of the City Dionysia featured a ritual re-enactment of the original epiphany of the god in the city of Athens, also known as εἰσαγωγή ἀπό τῆς ἐσχάρας.[142] The statue of the god was to be escorted to a small temple of the deity near the Academy on the way to Eleutherai and led back to the Athenian theatre in a torchlight procession led by the *epheboi*, as we hear from the so-called ephebic inscriptions.[143]

[140] For more on advent festivals see the relevant discussion in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[141] Pickard-Cambridge (1988², 59–62) and figs 10, 12, and 13. see also chapter 5.

[142] *IG* II² 1006, 12–14 with Deubner (1932, 139). Meuli, as quoted by D. Steiner (2001, 167, n. 126), suggests that the procession was part of the Athenian Lenaea: the chained statue of Dionysus was paraded through the city streets on the ship wagon. see also chapter 5.

[143] *IG* II² 1006 (dated to 122–121 BC); 1011 (dated to 106–105 BC) with Pickard-Cambridge (1982, 60ff.), where he notes that notwithstanding the late date of our sources the ritual 're-enactment of the god's advent does not look like an afterthought and probably goes back to the earliest days of the festival when, after his first cold welcome, it was desired to make amends by doing him special honour'.

Likewise, a conspicuous place was reserved for the cult statue of Iacchus in the chariot procession of the Eleusinian festival, which was, as will be shown shortly, Demeter's advent festival.[144] On a particular day of the Mysteries known as εἰκάς, Demeter's visit to Athens had to reach an end and she had to return to Eleusis.[145] An elaborate procession, with the priestesses of Eleusis in the lead, would lead the *hiera*—the earthly *pars pro toto* manifestation of the goddess's visitation (more on which in due course)—from the Eleusinion, through the Agora, to the Dipylon and the Iaccheion.[146] In the Iaccheion they would find Iacchus in the form of his wooden effigy: the youthful god with his torches and his hunting boots, who led the *mystai* to their final destination, the Eleusinian Telesterion.[147] That Iacchus' statue was perceived as the earthly manifestation of the god is evident from the kind of treatment it received: it was crowned with a wreath of myrtle and was carried in a carriage, an honour denied to the *mystai*, reserved only for the priestly personnel and the god himself. The Iacchagōgos, the god's priest with the god's image, would take his place at the head of the procession, which followed Demeter on the road to Eleusis (*Hiera Hodos*) amidst much sacred exhilaration and festive singing.[148] While on their way they would sing the Iacchus song, which would invoke the god to accompany them, and they would often stop briefly to get some rest from the wearisome journey and perform sacrifices, choral songs, and various *dromena*.[149]

While there is no decisive evidence for the use of statues of either Demeter or Kore in the Great Mysteries, the cult statue of the Kore was in the foreground in Kore's advent festivals in other parts of Greece: Pausanias, for instance, attests the

Pausanias (1.29.2) reports on the size of the temple: *καὶ ναὸς οὐ μέγας ἐστίν, ἐς ὃν τοῦ Διονύσου τοῦ Ἐλευθερέως τὸ ἄγαλμα ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος κομίζουσιν ἐν τεταγμέναις ἡμέραις*. See also Seaford (1994, 240–2).

[144] In historical times, it was believed that Iacchus manifested his godhead by helping the Greeks against the Persians in the naval battle of Salamis. The story is preserved by both Herodotus (8.65) and Plutarch (*Them.* 15.1). There is a detailed discussion of the passages in chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies'.

[145] The 19th of Boedromion was called εἰκάς (= twentieth) because Greeks used to count the beginning of a day from sunset onwards. The procession would reach Eleusis towards the evening of the 19th, i.e. at the start of the twentieth day. This is at least the explanation given by Mylonas (1961, 256, n. 151). Clinton (1986, 70) and Mansfield (1985, 434–7) argue in favour of two separate ephebic processions, one that would escort the *hiera* back to Eleusis on the 19th of Boedromion, and one other that would escort Iacchus' statue and the *mystai* to Eleusis the next day, that is on the 20th of Boedromion. Graf (1996, 62–3) argues convincingly enough that such a hypothesis presents some serious logistic and textual problems. Mylonas' thesis is not discussed by Graf. More on the debate in Parker (2005, 348).

[146] Plut. *Arist.* 27.

[147] On Iacchus' iconographical physiognomy see for instance the relief hydria from Cumae, known otherwise as Regina Vasorum (Clinton 1992, p. 79, fig. III.9), and the Ninnion pinax from Eleusis (now in the Archaeological Museum at Athens, 11036); Mylonas (1961, fig. 88, and 213–21). Cf. also Graf (1974, 46–50) and Clinton (1992, 90–5) and Clinton (2007, 349–50, figs 22.3 and 22.2 respectively).

[148] Paus. (1.24) mentions a statue of Iacchus by Praxiteles. Evidence that the procession to Eleusis is following the steps of Demeter, or else that Demeter was imagined to accompany the chorus to their pilgrimage, is provided in Aristophanes, *Frogs* 384ff.: the chorus invokes Demeter to stand by their side (*συμπαραστάτει*) and in 399–400 they point out that Iacchus is following Demeter: *δεῦρο συνακολούθει πρὸς τὴν θεόν*.

[149] As we can infer from the song's comic version as found in Aristoph. *Frogs* 314–413. Cf. also Plut. *Alc.* 34.3–5; *IG* II^{2}1078, 29. We may note here the imperative *ἐλθέ*, when the *mystai* address the god, a typical invocation feature found in cultic hymn, which aims at epiphanizing the god, namely at making the god appear.

use of Kore's *xoanon* in the ritual enactment of the seasonal epiphany of the goddess in Helos (Laconia);[150] while during the Koragia in Mantineia, another advent festival of Kore, it is again the statue of the goddess that is removed from the temple to the house of a certain individual, and then taken back to its original location.[151]

Moving away now from the Greek mainland to the Hellenized cities of western Anatolia and to Caria in particular, the Panamareia festival (that is the annual festivities held in honour of Zeus Panamaros or Panamerios) is another example of a festive occasion wherein the cult statue of the god is perceived by the participants as the earthly manifestation of the deity. The festival began with a procession from the precinct at Panamara to the city chamber at Stratonikeia and it was mostly known as the *ἐπιδημία τοῦ θεοῦ*. In this particular festival, it was the god in the form of his cult statue that paid visits to the neighbouring towns.[152]

All five examples of advent festivals (two from Attica, two from the Peloponnese, and one from Caria) given above illustrate the central role the divine cult statue played in re-enacting the first or seasonal arrival of the deity in the course of sacred processions (*πομπαί*). In the context of these festive occasions and, above all, in the eyes of their contemporary participants, cult statues served as the earthly manifestation of the upcoming deity.[153] But even in the course of the other parts of the festivals that preceded or anteceded the sacred processions, the divine cult statue (*ἄγαλμα*, *ξόανον*, *βρέτας*, *κτλ.*) was often found at the heart of the festivities by simply being shown to the participants, perhaps imbued with the morning light, when the doors of the temples were opened for the spectators to view the deity and for the deity to rejoice in the sacrifices with his/her worshippers.[154] Ritual viewing of the cult statue of a deity must have been a unique experience, if we are to judge from the words of Dio of Prusa, who maintained that contemplating the sacred statue of Zeus in Olympia could lift the burden of care even from a man tortured with sorrows and anxieties and could offer a traveller the divine gift of untroubled sleep.[155]

The god was imagined as dwelling in his temple throughout the whole year, but there were certain other times—for example during the celebration of epiphanic festivals—when the god was thought of as arriving at his sanctuary (*ἐπιδημῶν*).[156] On the dates when his epiphany was celebrated, the presence of the deity must have been felt more vividly 'and his cult statue may have seemed in the eyes of the

[150] Paus. 3.20.7: *ἐκ τούτου δὴ τοῦ Ἕλους ξόανον Κόρης τῆς Δήμητρος ἐν ἡμέραις ῥηταῖς ἀνάγουσιν ἐς τὸ Ἐλευσίνιον*.

[151] *IG* V.2. 265–6; with Sourvinou-Inwood (2003a, 39) and Jost (1985, 346–9). *Koragia* processions/festivals are attested in Attica (as part of a festival in honour of Herakles: *IG* II^2 1247, 20); in Macedonia (Herakleia Lynkestis: *SEG* 33:529,1); and in Rome (*IGUR* II, 337).

[152] Cook (1914, vol. I, 20). He also agrees with Höfer that the rider appearing on some silver and bronze coins from Stratonikeia is Zeus.

[153] Romano (1986, 127). For the use of old *xoana* in mystery cults see Burkert (1983, 287, n. 62) and Mylonas (1961, 273).

[154] On the semantic difference between these terms see Platt (2011, 17, 24, 61, and 92–100).

[155] Dio of Prusa, *Olymp. Or.* 12, 51. More on the subject of ritual viewing in Gordon (1979, 5–34); Tanner (2001) and (2006); Rutherford (2001b, 40ff.); Steiner (2001, esp. chaps 2 and 3); Auffarth (2010); Platt (2011, 226–35).

[156] More on this topic in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

worshippers to have been filled with the god's presence'.[157] During these days the statue of the god was bestowed with greater significance: it represented the divine presence and it was usually on those special dates of the sacred calendar that the doors of his temple were opened to the public.[158]

Let us take the opening of the fifth Callimachean hymn to Athena, for example, where the arrival of the statue of the deity is eagerly awaited by the participants.[159] The cultic setting of this hymn is the Argive festival of Plynteria, where the cult statue of the virginal deity was ritually washed and purified in the river Inachus. In the ritual context of the festival, Pallas' naked cult statue becomes both the visual reminder and the substitute for the divine body; it poses the same challenges and the same dangers as the naked body of the bathing Athena in the *diegesis* part of the hymn (75–130).[160] When the statue is about to arrive, a member of the priestly personnel cries: 'I heard the sacred mares; the goddess too is ready to come' (2–3).[161] The Teiresias myth serves as a reminder, which reinforces the ritual prohibitions for the Argive men not to look upon the 'naked' cult statue of the goddess. Indeed, it is hard to see that in this particular case the cult statue is anything but the substitute for the divine body. It is actually the nearest to a divine body that humans can handle without having to suffer any disastrous consequences. The mythic *diegesis* underscores the importance of viewing and invests the experience of ritual viewing with new meaning by embedding it within the safe ritual context of the festival, as opposed to Teiresias' direct and eventually fatal viewing experience.

The much-awaited arrival of Apollo in Callimachus' second hymn takes place in a similar cultic context. The occasion whereon Apollo's epiphany was expected was the epiphanic festival of Carneia in Cyrene.[162] The trembling of the laurel branch (often interpreted as a *pars pro toto* epiphany of the god), the nodding of the palm tree (closely associated with Apollo's birth epiphany here but also in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*), the singing of the swan (the sacred bird of both the god and his mother), the spontaneous opening of the doors, and the seismic quivering of the ground are all epiphanic *sēmeia* that herald the arrival, the ἐπιδημία of the god (1–6).[163] He is imagined as knocking at the door of the temple with his

[157] Dickie (2002, 117).

[158] There must have been great variation in this field, mainly depending on the nature of the deity and his/her cult. There were temples that remained opened to visitors most days of the year and other temples that were opened only for one day, or even closed throughout the year, the priestly personnel alone having access to them. For more information on these regulations see Corbett (1970).

[159] Platt (2011, 175–80).

[160] Loraux (1995, 211–26). Hunter and Fuhrer (2002, 160): Callimachus raises the question of whether, in seeing an image or a statue, we are 'seeing' the god as Teiresias saw her.

[161] The identity of the person who utters the proclamation is not clear in Callimachus' text. However, it is generally believed to be some member of the priestly personnel, since the poet as a man would not have been allowed to look upon the naked body of the goddess.

[162] Hunter and Fuhrer (2002, 155) express some understandable reservations on this issue: 'it may be more accurate to imagine a fluid "ritual context" which can at one moment be the Cyrenean Carneia and the next a celebration in Delphi'.

[163] Cf. Schol. *ad* line 12: 'it is said in the case of prophetic gods that the deities are sometimes present (ἐπιδημεῖν), sometimes absent (ἀποδημεῖν), and when they are present the oracles are true, when absent false'. See also Pind. *Pyth.* 4.5: οὐκ ἀποδάμου Ἀπόλλωνος τυχόντος. For Apollo as a deity that exhibits exeptional divine mobility see the relevant discussion in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

beautiful foot (3). 'The god is no longer far away,' cries one of the participants (7). Like every other epiphanic experience the imminent manifestation of Apollo takes place in the eyes of the beholders, and in particular in the eyes of those ready to see him. The text, however, is clear about one thing: 'not everyone sees Apollo, when he manifests himself. But whosoever sees him, he is great indeed; but whosoever does not see the god, he is of low estate' (9–10). 'We shall see you, o Archer, and we shall never be unworthy,' yells another participant. The pious and the pure will see the god, but in what form? In all probability, as soon as the doors of the temples were opened, the worshippers would have laid eyes on the golden cult statue of the god imbued in the light of the dawn. And this, in all likelihood, would have been the only epiphany they expected to have at this stage.[164] In this highly charged ritual context, the cult statue of the deity became animated in the eyes of its beholders.

However, perhaps the most explicit paradigm of a statue animated in the eyes of its beholder comes from another Callimachean work, the *Aitia*. Fragment 114 is unique in preserving a lively discussion an onlooker has with the golden cult statue of Apollo in Delos.[165] Despite the fragmentary state of the poem, its content is mostly recoverable from the remaining lines: the god himself, in the form of his cult statue in Delos, is being interviewed by a human, whose identity is uncertain.[166] He could be a trader, a devotee, a *theōros* (a pilgrim in the absence of a better translation), or simply a visitor with antiquarian tastes visiting the temple. The first question of the dialogue is lost, but the answer is preserved: 'Yes, me the Delian' (4). The second question is lost as well, but we have its beginning and the god's answer to it: 'Are you . . . ?', 'Yes, by myself' (5). This last line makes it quite certain that the one who gives the answers is the god himself. Only a god could take an oath by himself. The third and the fourth questions are only partially preserved, but again the answers provided can be safely reconstructed: the god answers 'Yes, golden', and 'only a belt covers my waist'. In their fifth exchange the human inquires about the god's paraphernalia and attributes: why he holds a bow in the one hand and the three Charites in the other. Apollo answers that he intends to check the impious with his left hand, the one that holds the bow; but to the pious he stretches out his other hand, the one he holds the Charites with. The fact that the fragment is part of the *Aitia*, a collection of aitiological myths that account for local festivals, rituals, religious practices, and their origins, makes it possible that what we have here could be the narration of a pilgrim's epiphanic experience that took place within the temple. Alternatively, the god may have appeared to the pilgrim (the poet himself?) in the course of a dream, and the initial questions represent the speaker's need to identify the dream figure.

This fragmentary narrative seems to me to be more than just another case of a talking cult statue. The artefact is indeed invested with the power of speech and even with intellectual capacity, but above all it seems animated by the expectations

[164] Call. *Hymn*. 2 with Dickie (2002, 113). Contra Henrichs (1993a, 143).

[165] See *Aitia* fr. 114 in Pfeiffer's *Callimachus* (1949), vol. I with Addenda in vol. I and Prolegomena in vol. II, xiii–xiv; and Pfeiffer (1960) for reconstruction, translation, and commentary. For a recent discussion on this fragment and the *Aitia* as a whole, see Harder (2012).

[166] Along with parallels from Plutarch, Macrobius, and Philo, on which see Pfeiffer (1960, 64), who provides an analytical discussion.

of its onlooker. Similar expectations were raised not only in a cultic context, but also in crisis. We recall here the urgency with which the images of Aeacus and his sons were requested to escort and assist the Greek naval force against the Persians in the battle of Salamis.[167] According to a tradition present in Herodotus' time, the ship that fetched the divine images was the first to attack the enemy. It is interesting here that the arrival of the divine images was treated as the natural sequel to the official prayers and invocations to the gods just before the beginning of the battle. The Greeks looked upon Aeacus and his sons as active and valuable divine *symmachoi*, not as inanimate pieces of art.

Likewise in Sparta, it is hard to see how the cult images of the Dioscuri would have been thought of as inanimate inorganic objects, when an image of one of the sons of Tyndareus was always meant to accompany one of the Spartan kings on his military campaigns, whilst the other divine image had to stay at home with the other king to provide assistance and divine protection on a civic level.[168] If these artefacts were not considered as the earthly manifestations of the divinities they depicted at all times, then they surely acquired such gravitas and significance in moments of crisis, such as sieges and military clashes. Why else were the allies of the Spartans given these same images of the sons of Tyndareus, when the Epyzephyrian Locroi asked them for assistance during the battle of the river Sagra (between 555 and 540 BC) in South Italy? Diodorus relates that the ambassadors accepted the help and prepared a couch for the twin gods on the ship,[169] while according to Justin special pillows/sacred couches (*pulvinaria*) were added to facilitate the journey of the gods.[170] The gods were also seen fighting in person in the first ranks in red cloaks riding on white horses.

Gods and heroes were present in the battles in the form of their cult statues or other forms of representational art. Their cult statues found themselves involved in actual epiphanies, like the one of Artemis' cult statue in Pellene (more on which shortly);[171] and pseudo-epiphanies, as in the case of Epaminondas' stratagem in the battle of Leuctra.[172] Their cult statues were treated as the corporeal manifestation of the god not only in times of public crisis but also in times of personal crisis, as the numerous instances of animated statues of Asclepius and Sarapis show.[173] The minimum that can be established from the examples discussed above is that, for the Greeks, cult statues were inanimate artefacts, but given certain sufficient and essential ritual conditions, they could be perceived as *deus manifestus ac praesens*.

[167] Hdt. 8.65. See Pritchett (1979, 14) and Harrison (2000, 83, n. 52).

[168] Hdt. 5.75.2.

[169] Diod. Sic. 8.32; cf. Strabo 6.1.10.261. The phrase *ἔστρωσαν τοῖς Διοσκόροις κλίνην ἐπὶ τῆς νηὸς* may imply that some sort of theoxenic rites took place on board.

[170] Justin 20.2–3.

[171] Plut. *Arat.* 32.12.

[172] Polyaen. 2.3.8. See '*Pars pro toto* epiphany' below.

[173] E.g. Aristid. *Or.* 49.47; *Or.* 50.50–1; Suda II 127, 29; II 52, 18 s.vv. *Δομνῖνος* and *διαγκωνισάμενος*. More examples in chapter 3.

Viewing divine images entails the same dangers and challenges as viewing gods in person

In the third and last subsection of '*Effigies* epiphanies' I argue that divine images could be perceived as the earthly manifestation of a deity, provided that viewing those images entailed the same dangers and posed the same challenges as viewing the divinities in person. When, for instance, a cult statue of a deity manifested itself in the eyes of a human and demanded immediate recognition and unconditional devotion, and even punished the viewer when the latter failed to recognize the divinity within, then the divine image posed the same questions and the same challenges to its viewers as the corporeal manifestations of the divine. Steiner rightly thinks of cult statues as both containing and concealing the unattainable force of the divine, thus allowing for safe interaction between the deity depicted and the worshippers.[174] Taking this idea one step further, we can understand the exterior shape and the form of the cult statues as functioning almost like the gods' disguises when confronting their human worshippers in a bodily shape. The exterior shape and form of the divine statuary representations, just like anthropomorphic disguise, both enable and impede recognition and interaction between mortals and immortals. This thesis can be further supported by a number of narratives, in which it is not viewing the divinity itself but a particularly ominous cult statue of his or hers that leads to the blinding, loss of wits, or even the transformation of the viewer.[175] These instances reinforce the identification between the epiphanic deity and his or her statuary representation.

Ilos, for instance, was blinded after seizing the Palladion from the goddess's shrine in Troy, because he looked at the statue, notwithstanding the well-known ritual prohibition which forbids men to look upon it. Unsurprisingly enough, the same fate befell Antylus (the variant Metellus also appears), who took the Palladion from the temple of Vesta at Rome. Both men propitiated the deities and regained their vision.[176] Equally unlucky were Astrabacus and Alopecus, who having found the wooden image (*xoanon*) of Artemis Orthia at Sparta went mad straightaway.[177] And so, apparently, did Eurypylus, who found an image (*agalma*) of Dionysos Aisymnetes in a chest at Troy.[178]

Comparable to this are the numerous prohibitions concerning the ritual viewing of ominous or powerful cult statues: Pliny, for instance, reports that at the temple of the Ephesian Artemis the priests warn the visitors 'to be careful with their eyes' when they look upon the statue of Hera, which occupied the opisthodomos of the temple;[179] such is the radiance and the glare of the marble, as Pliny explains. Nevertheless, what prima facie appears to be here a rationalistic explanation could be simply a clever gloss over some older traditional stories that related the catastrophic results that 'improper' viewing of the statues could impart on its viewers.[180] Pausanias reports several other instances, where more severe prohibitions apply to the viewing of the cult statue sheltered in the temple. In Olympia, for instance, the periegete encountered the statue of the snake god Sosipolis that

[174] Steiner (2001, 80ff.). [175] Buxton (1980, 30–3). [176] Plut. *Mor.* 309f–310a.
[177] Paus. 3.16.9. [178] Paus. 7.19.6–9 with Buxton (1980, 33) and Steiner (2001, 82).
[179] Pliny, *HN* 36.32. [180] Steiner (2001, 178).

no one else was allowed to view apart from the priestess; and even she had to approach the statue covered in a veil. In like fashion, Plutarch informs us of a particularly ancient statue (*bretas*) of Artemis Soteria in Pellene, which was terrible and grievous to look upon (*ὄραμα φρικτὸν εἶναι καὶ χαλεπόν*) for both humans and inanimate objects like trees.[181] This statue caused trees to become barren and shed their fruit as it was paraded through the streets of the city during its annual procession. The statue, when looked upon directly (*ἀντιπρόσωπον*), could rob its viewers of their senses. Frontisi-Ducroux rightly argues that terms like *prosōpon* or *antiprosōpon* denote reciprocal visual activity, i.e. the viewer looks upon the statue, but the statue and/or the goddess also looks upon the viewer.[182] Correspondingly, viewing such images was an important form of interaction with the divine.

Now, one may naturally wonder whether the same claim can be made about aniconic or semi-iconic images. Did the Greeks perceive them as concealing and containing divine power? Can we really assume that aniconic or semi-iconic representations of the divine body behaved the same way as the gods and the goddesses' anthropomorphic images? Certainly, aniconic images, like the Tegean stelae with the small pyramid caps and with divine names in nominative inscribed thereon,[183] or the statue of Hermes Perpheraios, featured in epiphanic narratives and challenged their human viewers to discover the discrepancy between their peculiar appearance and the deity concealed within.[184]

The aforementioned epiphany of Hermes Perpheraios to a group of fishermen in Ainos is of particular interest here. The fishermen captured in their nets the god in the form of an amorphous block of wood, and failed to recognize the god's divinity;[185] they failed to demonstrate the insight into the divine nature that is essential for a successful interaction between mortals and immortals. Hence they tried to cut the statue into pieces, burn it, or even throw it back to the sea. Nothing quite worked: the wooden image of the god refused to be cut, refused to be burnt, refused to leave its human worshippers. Even in aniconic form the Greek gods do not fail to transcend human and natural limitations and thus demonstrate their divinity.

Other aniconic images were made known to mortals by enlightened individuals who first recognized their divinity. Such was the case of Dionysus in the shape of a phallus that was brought to Athens by Pegasos.[186] The Athenians failed to *see*

[181] Plut. *Arat*. 32.13. It was exactly this most frightening and solemn image of Artemis carried out by her priestess that robbed the Aitolians, who were besieging the city, of their reason.

[182] Frontisi-Ducroux (1995, 20).

[183] Paus. 7.22.4. Other aniconic images include Apollo Aguios as a pillar, Zeus Meilichios as a pyramid, Hermes as a heap of stones. For more examples and ample documentation of both primary and secondary sources see Donohue (1988, 224ff.) and more recently Steiner (2001, 82ff.). Pfeiffer (1960) speculates on the existence of an ancient small, and probably aniconic, statue of Apollo in his temple on Delos, his sacred island (an analogue to the small, wooden, aniconic statues of Athena Polias and Samian Hera). For this statue our only sources are Plutarch's *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Πλαταιαῖς Δαιδάλων*, fr. 10 and Phanodemos *FGrHist* 325 Fr 2.

[184] Petrovic (2010b). Freedberg (1989, 34, fig. 13) for a fourth-century drachma from Ainos with the aniconic statue of the gods enthroned. Cf. also *P.Gen*. IV.155.

[185] Call. *Iamb*. VII, 197; *Dieg*. VII 32–VIII51 Pfeiffer.

[186] Schol. *ad* Ar. *Ach*. 243a Wilson. It might be worth noting here that Dionysus' images, like his divine manifestations in person, present the greatest disparity between their appearance and what lies

through, to penetrate the bizarre exterior shape of the statue and were punished by Dionysus, who retaliated by sending out a disease that afflicted their genitals. The core of this narrative is not different from these other theoxenic narratives,[187] where the god appears in an anthropomorphic disguise and makes trial of the human reception: 'by masking their divine essence beneath an outlandish or enigmatic appearance, the cult images of the god merely recapitulate the nature of their original and, like Dionysus, in his own visitations, challenge viewers to see what lies below the surface'.[188]

Iconic and aniconic divine images should not be perceived in opposition to one another, but as interchangeable variants of divine morphology.[189] In fact, aniconic and semi-iconic statues appear to reflect the libertinism that Greek gods exhibit in choosing their form of manifestation. Steiner rightly underscores the importance of such statues in ritual, where there is a necessity for the divine presence to be either amply demonstrated or subtly alluded to, but without being restrained in terms of shape.[190] Furthermore, aniconic images avoid complications and confusion that could be seen to be inherent in the naturalistic anthropomorphic images: such confusion would naturally arise from the comparison between the self-image of the human viewer and the body image of the divinity viewed. No such problems arise from the viewing of aniconic images: they are otherworldly enough to represent divinities and to presuppose divine creators. Frontisi-Ducroux (1995, 222–4) rightly argues that this need for differentiation between human and divine morphology would have been more urgent in the cases of divinities like Dionysus and Herakles, divinities heavily involved in human affairs. More significantly, ritual viewing of both iconic and aniconic divine images aims at reproducing the epiphanic experience.[191]

PHASMA EPIPHANY

In the previous section we mentioned briefly the epiphany of the Aeacidae in the naval battle of Salamis in the form of their images—in all probability small, wooden ones. In Plutarch's account of the same event, the heroes were also said to have appeared fighting alongside the Greek triremes, but this time in the form of *phasmata* and *eidōla*, ethereal figures of men in arms that were seen to have been stretching out their hands in front of the Greek ships.[192] In fact, ancient Greek historiography and biography are rife with epiphanies of gods and heroes

underneath them. Just like Dionysus himself when he visits the households of mortals in disguise and tests their hospitality, his extraordinary images challenge their viewers to penetrate their surface and painstakingly discover the divine identity underneath.

[187] More examples in chapter 7. [188] Steiner (2001, 84).

[189] On aniconism in general and aniconic representations of the divine in Greek material art, see Gaifman (2012, 17–46).

[190] Steiner (2001, 183). [191] Cf. Tanner (2001, 261).

[192] Plut. *Them.* 15.2: *ἕτεροι δὲ φάσματα καὶ εἴδωλα καθορᾶν ἔδοξαν ἐνόπλων ἀνδρῶν ἀπ' Αἰγίνης τὰς χεῖρας ἀνεχόντων πρὸ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν τριήρων, οὓς εἴκαζον Αἰακίδας εἶναι παρακεκλημένους εὐχαῖς πρὸ τῆς μάχης ἐπὶ τὴν βοήθειαν.*

that manifest themselves in war in the form of a *phasma* and assist the belligerent Greek city states.

Conon, a historian of the first century BC, for instance, informs us that Ajax, who enjoyed a cult status in Locris, was thought to have been fighting in the first rank of the Locrian force during the battle of the river Sagra.[193] Apparently, the Locrians used to keep a visible gap in their military ranks at all times, and that visible gap was to be filled by their invisible divine ally. This conundrum was obviously too much for Autoleon, the leader of the Crotoniates, who underestimated the physical impact of the hero's contribution, and launched an attack on this prima facie weak point of their line. Of course, Ajax in the form of his *phasma* fought back, as Conon reports, and hurt Autoleon in his thigh (*τρωθεὶς δ' ὑπὸ φάσματος τὸν μηρὸν*), a wound that eventually proved to be gangrenous. In an analogous fashion, the *phasmata* of Helen and the Dioscuri fought sternly on the side of the Spartans in their wars against the Messenians, and were said to have prevented the Messenian hero Aristomenes from defeating the Spartans on numerous occasions.[194] Other examples of epiphanies in the form of a *phasma* in the course of a battle include the *phasma* of a woman (mostly heard rather than seen) who raised a loud cry and rebuked the Greeks for their prolonged procrastination on the eve of the sea battle at Salamis;[195] and Theseus' *phasma*, who was seen leading the attack against the enemy lines at Marathon; while at Plataea a certain Polyzelus was reported to have lost his vision after having encountered the *phasma* of a hoplite (Suda does not preclude the possibility of this *phasma* being Pan) of such great stature that his shadow darkened his shield.[196] Moreover, *phasmata* of local heroes (Hyperochus, Laodocus, Pyrrhos, and Phylacus) were also seen in arms when the Gauls attacked the oracle of Delphi in 279 BC. These *phasmata* fought alongside the Delphians and caused the enemy terror and confusion.

But what exactly is a *phasma*? How does a *phasma* differ from, let us say, the anthropomorphic manifestation of a god or hero? The battlefield aside, what are the other epiphanic contexts wherein their presence is attested? While our sources do not provide a definitive answer to these questions, they do give some useful indications.

Firstly, *phasmata* are often associated with night and the underworld, and as such they feature in cultic activities and festivals of initiatory character. A *phasma*, for instance, can have the bodily quality of Empousa, a ghostly outlandish vision sent by Hecate;[197] while the bodies of the Furies (*Semnae*) in Orestes' nightmarish visions are also described as *phasmata*.[198] Alternatively, a *phasma* can be used to describe the bodily quality of a dead person that appears in front of the eyes of a

[193] Phot. *Bibl.* 186.133b = *FGrHist* 26 Fr 1, 18. More on the battle at the river Sagra in chapter 2.

[194] Paus. 4.16.9: *ἐς μὲν αὐτὴν Σπάρτην ἔξοδον ποιούμενος νύκτωρ ἀπετράπετο ὑπὸ φασμάτων Ἑλένης καὶ Διοσκούρων*. On this episode see Ogden (2004, 59–74).

[195] Hdt. 8.84.

[196] Suda s.v. *Ἱππίας* (iota. 545). Cf. also Hdt 6.117. On Pan's epiphany to the runner Pheidippides (or Philippides as seen here), see the Introduction and the relevant discussion in chapter 4.

[197] Suda, s.v. *Ἔμπουσα*; and Orig. *Contra Celsum* 1.9. For a detailed discussion on Empousa see also chapter 4.

[198] Eur. *Or.* 407.

living person.[199] In that respect, a *phasma* can be taken to be a synonym for *eidolon*. What Orpheus sees in Hades is not really his wife, it is a spectral apparition in the likeness of his wife; in other words, he sees her *phasma*.[200] Similarly in Euripides' *Alcestis* 1127, where Admetus, while looking upon his wife, cannot believe that Herakles brought her back alive from the underworld; he suspects that what he is looking upon is a *phasma* in the likeness of his wife. Menelaus, on the other hand, in Euripides' *Helen*, who can clearly see a woman's body in the likeness of his wife and yet doubts whether it is indeed Helen in the flesh, thinks that he is confronted with a *phasma* sent by Hecate.[201]

Yet it would not be quite accurate to conclude that all *phasmata* are of anthropomorphic or even teratomorphic nature. The term *phasma* denotes also extreme and unexplained natural phenomena ranging from solar and lunar eclipses to heavy rain accompanied by thunderbolts coming from a cloudless sky, or even drizzle in rainless Egypt.[202] From the examples mentioned above, we can infer that a *phasma* can be of anthropomorphic, teratomorphic, or even amorphous nature.

Secondly, the term *phasma* is often used to describe dreamlike or dream-related figures. In this sense a *phasma* can be semantically very close to *oneiros* or *oneiron*.[203] Nonetheless, the two are not exactly the same. In a passage from his *Laws* (910B), for example, Plato distinguishes between visions in waking reality and visions in dreams, using the terms *phasma* and *oneiron* respectively. Even so, in a number of our sources from a wide chronological range the term *phasma*(*ta*) is used to describe dream visions: Iphigenia, for instance, uses the word *phasmata* to refer to her dreams and Caesar's *phasma* visits Brutus in his sleep.[204] In fact, in this last-mentioned example the term *phasma* is used almost as a synonym for *oneiros*, the dream figure of the Homeric texts.[205]

Phasma is variously translated in English as 'phantom', 'phantasm', 'ghost', 'apparition', 'spectre', etc. However, none of these words conveys exactly the meaning of the Greek word, which derives from *phainomai*; its semantic field, though, is far more restricted than its cognate *epiphaneia* and may vary considerably from one author to the other. When Greek authors describe a manifestation in a *phasma* form, they mean indeed a spectral appearance that has a more ethereal bodily quality than, let us say, the presence of a god or a hero in person. But, notwithstanding the emphasis on the beholder's subjective process of viewing, a *phasma* is not exactly a figment of one's imagination. First of all, with the exception of the *phasma* that Polyzelus encountered, in the rest of the aforementioned cases these *phasmata* were seen or heard by a great number of perceivers.

More significantly, the Greek *phasma* differs from what we mean when we speak of a ghost or a phantasm, because they appear to be endowed with a greater

[199] *El.* 501, 644, Schol. *ad* Eur. *Hec.* 53.15. [200] Pl. *Symp.* 179d.

[201] Eur. *Hel.* 569–70: {*Με.*} *ὦ φωσφόρ' Ἑκάτη, πέμπε φάσματ' εὐμενῆ.* | {*Ελ.*} *οὐ νυκτίφαντον πρόπολον Ἐνοδίας μ' ὁρᾷς.*

[202] Solar eclipse: Hdt. 7.37–8, Plut. *Pel.* 31.3–4; lunar eclipse: Plut. *Aem.* 17.7, *Sol.* 12.6. Compare also Plut. *Caes.* 63.2 where heavenly beams of light and unexplained noises in the middle of the night are described as a *phasma*. Light rain in Egypt: Hdt. 3.10.

[203] Koch-Piettre (1997). [204] Iphigenia: Eur. *IT* 42 and 1263; Caesar: Plut. *Caes.* 69.9.

[205] E.g. in *Il.* 2.1–34; *Od.* 4.841.

degree of physicality: Ajax's *phasma* when attacked, invisible though it may be, hits back and retaliates; while in both Sparta and Thasos, Astrabacus' and Herakles' *phasmata* respectively make love to human females and manage to produce descendants of flesh and blood.[206] Furthermore, Philostratus preserves an amusing post-epic tradition that holds Achilles to be the product of the sexual union between Peleus and the *phasma* of Thetis.[207] A comparable story (of Neoplatonic origins?) was also told about Plato: he was not the son of Aristandros, but the fruit of the sexual union of his mother Amphictione with Apollo's *phasma*![208] In Astrabacus' case, the *phasma* of the dead hero, whose shrine lies near Ariston's house, sleeps with his wife and leaves behind tangible proof of its visitation: a wreath of flowers.[209]

Hence, one would not be too far from the truth if one were to conclude that the difference between a *phasma*'s physicality and that of a corporeal divine manifestation is only a matter of degree. Even though a *phasma*'s materiality can be highly contested both by synchronic and diachronic viewers, a *phasma* leaves indisputable traces behind when interacting with the terrestrial world. A *phasma* is less concrete and more difficult to define, and yet impossible to be ignored: it may be viewed by one or more viewers; it leaves behind material traces of its advent; it can be both dangerous (in Epizelus' case it causes blindness and death) and beneficial (in a military and erotic context).[210] In other words, a *phasma* poses the same challenges as a corporeal divine manifestation, and for this very reason it is discussed here as a form of epiphany.

What's more, a *phasma* often features in narratives with a distinctively epiphanic flavour—such as the Herodotean passage on Aristeas' continuum of epiphanies—while in several narratives a *phasma* appears to be another morphological variant of divine manifestation, of equal value and dynamic to an *effigies* epiphany or an anthropomorphic one.[211] In the passage from Plutarch's *Aratus* mentioned above, that all three morphological variants of Artemis' epiphany coexist is very much to the point here: some say that the goddess appeared in the form of her cult statue, while others claim that it was a girl who visually assimilated herself to the goddess (enacted epiphany); and there is finally a third version of the same epiphany in which the goddess appears as a *phasma*.[212] In other cases, *phasma* presents itself as the morphological variant of an epiphany in one author but not in others: while Herodotus has it that the Aeacidae appeared

[206] Astrabacus' *phasma*: Hdt. 6.68ff.; Herakles' *phasma*: Paus. 6.11.2.

[207] Philostr. *Her*. 729–30. [208] Origen *Contra Celsum* 6.8.

[209] A more detailed discussion of this episode and of other erotic epiphanies that involved *phasmata* can be found in chapter 5.

[210] Cf. also Philostr. *Her*. 664.2, where another *phasma* causes blindness.

[211] Aristeas: Hdt. 4.13–15. See also the relevant discussion in chapter 8, 'Authoritative epiphanies: god-sent prestige and validity'.

[212] Plut. *Arat*. 32.1–3: *αὐτοῖς τε τοῖς πολίταις θέαμα σεμνότερον ἢ κατ' ἄνθρωπον ἐφάνη, καὶ τοῖς πολεμίοις φάσμα θεῖον ὁρᾶν δοκοῦσι φρίκην ἐνέβαλε καὶ θάμβος, ὥστε μηδένα τρέπεσθαι πρὸς ἀλκήν. αὐτοὶ δὲ Πελληνεῖς λέγουσι τὸ βρέτας τῆς θεοῦ τὸν μὲν ἄλλον ἀποκεῖσθαι χρόνον ἄψαυστον, ὅταν δὲ κινηθὲν ὑπὸ τῆς ἱερείας ἐκφέρηται, μηδένα προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον, ἀλλ' ἀποτρέπεσθαι πάντας· οὐ γὰρ ἀνθρώποις μόνον ὅραμα φρικτὸν εἶναι καὶ χαλεπόν, ἀλλὰ <καὶ> δένδρα ποιεῖν ἄφορα καὶ καρποὺς ἀπαμβλίσκειν δι' ὧν ἂν κομίζηται.*

in Salamis in the form of their statues, Plutarch writes that they appeared as *phasmata* and *eidola*.

The Samothracian version of Demeter's rape by Eetion or Iasion as narrated by different authors presents an analogous case: a) according to Hellanicus and Ps-Scymnus, Iasion was struck with lightning because he violated the statue of the goddess;[213] and b) Conon reports that Iasion violated Demeter's *phasma*;[214] while c) in Hesiod's text, our earliest attestation of this erotic epiphany, Iasion mated with Demeter in person.[215] It is extremely difficult to explain precisely the reasons behind such extensive morphological variation in the various reports of the same epiphany. Could it be that some of these authors felt it impossible or irreverent for a mortal to mate with the goddess in person? Aphrodite Avagianou finds explicit rationalistic tendencies in Hellanicus' and Conon's narratives.[216] But perhaps by substituting the divine body with her *phasma* or her cult statue some of these authors felt more comfortable in discussing a myth that may have been part of the *hieros logos* of the mystery cult of the Kabeiroi. Alternatively, all three of these morphological variants may not have felt so different after all, at least not in the minds of the authors who reported them.

With the aforementioned variants of the Demeter–Iasion story, we have already moved to mystery cults, yet another epiphanic context—along with battle and sexual interaction between mortals and immortals—where, according to our sources, deities often manifest themselves in the form of their *phasma*(*ta*). Compare here the often-quoted passage from Plato's *Phaedrus*: 'During our final initiation we viewed whole, simple, unshaken and blissful *phasmata*, in the pure light, being pure ourselves and not entombed ourselves in this thing which we now carry round with us and call body, imprisoned like oysters.'[217] Although one may rightly argue that what we have here is not a description of an initiatory process into a mystery cult, but simply a Platonic metaphor drawn from a large and complicated baggage of cultural references, we have, nevertheless, a number of other ancient testimonies on mystery cults wherein the word *phasma*(*ta*) features most prominently. Besides, as Wilson Nightingale has very convincingly argued, Plato's concept of philosophical *theōria* ('contemplative viewing') is based on the notion of religious *theōria* at the festival of the Greater Mysteries at Eleusis.[218] This is especially evident in his *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*: the philosopher's viewing of the Forms is compared to the sacred spectacles of the secret initiation

[213] Hellanicus, *FGrHist*. 4 F23 = Schol. *ad Ap. Rhod*. I.96: *κερανωθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑβρίζοντα ἄγαλμα τῆς Δήμητρος*. Ps. Scymnus, *Perieg*. 679–689 = *GGM* 22–223: *τὸν μὲν Ἰασίωνα δυσσέβημά τι πρᾶξαι περὶ Δήμητρος λέγουσ᾽ ἄγαλμα καί πληγῇ κερανωθέντα δαιμονίῳ θανεῖν*.

[214] Conon, *Narr. Const*. 21 = Phot. *Bibl*. 186.134a: *φάσμα Δήμητρος αἰσχῦναι βουληθεὶς ἐκερανώθη*.

[215] Hes. Fr. 117.8–12 M-W. Compare also Diod. Sic. 5.48, where Demeter is presented as being the active agent; she is the one that lusts after Iasion (*ἠράσθη*).

[216] Avagianou (1991, 171).

[217] Pl. *Phdr*. 250c. Plato repeatedly uses the language of vision and visuality to refer to the philosopher's quest for knowledge; cf. Plato *Phdr*. 244e. On the use of mystery terminology in Plato, see Linforth (1946), de Vries (1973), Riedweg (1987), Wilson-Nightingale (2005), Evans (2006), and Herrmann (2013). On divine *phasmata* in Eleusis, see Riedweg (1987, 52, 61–2). On mystery terminology and imagery in the rhetorical texts of the Imperial era, see Riedweg (1988) and Kirchner (2005).

[218] More on the topic in Wilson-Nightingale (2005, 173–80). See esp. p. 177. Cf. also *eadem* (2004, 14–22).

ceremony at Eleusis; *termini technici* from the Eleusinian cult are used (e.g. *Symp.* 209e–210a); there is an unmistakable focus on the movement from both literal and metaphorical darkness to both literal and metaphorical light; and, above all, the climactic viewing of the sacred visions carries both salvific and epistemic connotations. Private religious *theōria* was a widespread Greek cultural practice that involved travelling abroad to a Panhellenic sanctuary to witness an event or to see a spectacle.[219]

Modern scholars like Clinton think of *phasmata* as an essential part of the initiation into the mysteries at Eleusis. In his reconstruction of the 'sacred drama' in Eleusis, he argues that the word *phasmata* refers to extraordinary visual experiences produced by divine images illuminated from within or close up, like that of Demeter of Eukrates' marble votive plaque found in the area of the Eleusinian Telestērion (Fig. 1.1).[220]

It depicts a pair of eyes with the nose and eyebrows and is accompanied by the following inscription: *Δήμητρι Εὐκράτης* ('Eukrates [dedicates] to Demeter'). One could say that this votive relief resembles those found in the famous healing sanctuaries, if it were not for the remarkably beautiful image of a radiant Demeter with red rays springing out from her head, her hair, and her neck, attached to the top of the plaque.[221] This striking artefact is unique in having preserved most of the paint on its surface of white marble. We can even see the red paint on the right eye, the lips, and the eyes of the goddess. Her hair, on the other hand, is painted in a red-brown colour. The flat area that surrounds the nose and the eyes in the lower part of the relief must have also been painted in a bright red-orange colour. Clinton maintains that the rays of light that surround the deity's head allude to the light streaming from the image (or near the image) in the course of the initiation. If this were indeed the case, then a divine image illuminated appropriately in the middle of night would easily create the impression of an ethereal divine presence. It is also possible, though, that Eukrates dedicated the relief to commemorate his initiation and more importantly his vision of Demeter or Kore gleaming with divine light—either in the form of their cult images, or their *phasmata*, or even in the form of their priestesses re-enacting the sacred drama.

This vision of a light-emanating Demeter may very well allude to what Eukrates saw in the Telestērion. Although it is possible that this votive pair of eyes commemorated Eukrates' recovery from his blindness in the course of his initiation, or even independently, an equally plausible reading of the artefact would be to take it as an ex-voto commemorating his initiation into the mysteries of the two goddesses. Both alternatives point in the same direction: the dedicant of this striking artefact saw Demeter in the form of a beautiful woman enfolded in light at some climactic point during the secret ceremony. His votive relief has

[219] Rutherford (2001b).

[220] Now in the National Archaeological Museum at Athens (NAMA, Inv. No. 5256). Dimensions: H. 0.192 m, W. 0.17 m., Th. 0.18 m. On the inscription, see *IG* II^2 4639 and *I.Eleusis* 105 (plate 47) with further bibliography.

[221] Demeter at Eleusis was not ordinarily a healing deity, but at times the blazing light of the climactic revelation had the power to cure even physical blindness in addition to the ritual blindness of the uninitiated, as Clinton (2005, 110) argues. More on ritual blindness in Clinton (1992, 86–90). Some of these issues are also explored more extensively in Petridou (2013). On Demeter as healing deity see Rubensohn (1895) and Petridou (2014) and (forthcoming).

Fig. 1.1. Marble votive plaque found in the area of the Eleusinian Telesterion depicting a radiant Demeter (National Archaeological Museum at Athens Inv. No. 5256).

captured beautifully a unique moment of visual intensity, when the mortal viewed the immortal, and commemorated it for both the eyes of the goddesses, who preside in the sanctuary, and the eyes of the other *theōroi*, who would visit Eleusis in the future.[222] Van Straten has suggested that Eukrates dedicated the artefact to the goddess to commemorate not his recovered ὄρασις, but his attaining of ἐποπτεία, which is essentially an intensified visual experience.[223] An even more interesting reading of the artefact would be to take it as illustrating not the moment that *the initiate sees the deity*, but as the moment *the initiate was viewed*

[222] On the visual dynamic of votive offerings in sanctuaries see Petsalis-Diomidis (2005, 187–8) and Mylonopoulos (2006, 87).

[223] Van Straten (1981, 122).

by the deity, and thus as portraying Demeter's intense and commanding gaze. Whichever interpretation one adopts, the Eukrates relief seems to be a powerful testament to the centrality and the intensity of the ocularcentric processes that informed the initiate's experience at Eleusis.[224]

In fact, both pagan and Christian authors like Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom, Origen, and others make it clear that some sort of sacred *phasmata* must have been an integral part of the initiation into several other popular mystery cults, such as the Dionysiac mysteries.[225] Dionysus' epiphany in the form of a *phasma* is yet another one of his many crafty and challenging disguises, which were aptly utilized when the god was confronted with those opposing his cultic advent.[226] Dionysus often appeared to have used multiple disguises to escape, confuse, or retaliate. *Phasmata* were thus employed by the god in his attempt to teach his adversaries a lesson: in a number of cases it is intentionally left ambiguous as to whether these *phasmata* are simply sent by the god or they are identified with him. When imprisoned in Pentheus' stables, for instance, Dionysus confuses further his pursuer by producing a *phasma* that the Theban prince mistakes for the god and pierces with his sword. The reading *φάσμα* is not certain. It is Jacob's conjecture, adopted by Murray and Diggle. But this is a conjecture which makes sense both in terms of metre and content.[227] Furthermore, it is supported by a passage from Suda, where Dionysus appears to the daughters of Eleuther as a *phasma* holding a black shield.[228] The young women fail to recognize the divinity of the god's *phasma* and are thus driven mad. The oracle deciphers the epiphanic *sēmeia* and advises accordingly: the girls' father must initiate the cult of Dionysus with the black shield (Dionysus Melas) as the antidote to their mental affliction. Yet again we are confronted with a *phasma* that poses the same challenges and entails the same dangers as viewing bodily divine manifestations. In summary, *phasmata*—like other forms of epiphany—can be both beneficial and hazardous, both advantageous and perilous; they become the *aition* for instituting cults, temples, festivals, statues, and votive reliefs; and above all they challenge their viewers to discover the divine identity within.[229]

[224] More on this topic in Petridou (2013).

[225] Plut. Fr. 178 Sandback = Stob. iv.52.49; Dio Chrysostom, *Or*. 4.90 and 12.33 von Arnim; and Or. *Contra Celsum* 4.10 Borret: *διόπερ ἐξομοιοῖ ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἐν ταῖς Βακχικαῖς τελεταῖς τὰ φάσματα καὶ τὰ δείματα προεισάγουσι*.

[226] His multiformity is also reflected in his artistic representations, as Philostratus (*Imag*. 1.15) informs us: *Διονύσου τε μυρία φάσματα τοῖς γράφειν ἢ πλάττειν βουλομένοις*.

[227] Contra Seaford (1994) who adopts the L, P reading and gives *φῶς*, though, as he maintains in one of his earlier papers (1981, 259), both the Dionysiac and the Eleusinian mysteries were associated with *φάσματα*.

[228] Suda s.v. *Μέλαν*.

[229] Pl. *Leg*. 5.738b–d and 10.909e–910a. Cf. also the discussion in chapter 8, 'Explanatory function: epiphanies and making sense of the world'.

PARS PRO TOTO EPIPHANY: GODS IN FRACTIONS

So far we have established that in a festival context a deity tended to manifest its presence either through her or his cult statue (*effigies* form) or through the visual assimilation of a member of the priestly personnel to the deity (enacted epiphany). In addition, as the preceding section has shown, a divine epiphany in the form of a *phasma* was not uncommon in a festive context, especially festivals with mysteric or initiatory aspects, such as the mysteries of Dionysus and Demeter in Attica.

It is time to introduce a fourth representational strategy, equally popular on festive occasions, whereby the arrival of a deity was signified by the discovery of a symbol of the divine entity or essence. There was a wide scope for the selection of such a symbol, provided that it was consistent with a deity's particular religious persona and functions, i.e. the deity's sacred animal or plant, or even the deity's sacred paraphernalia: his or her garments, weaponry, or footwear. Most interestingly the divine presence could also be signified by the deity's footprint or footprints. In the Elean festival of Thyia, for instance, Dionysus' advent was signified by the miraculous appearance of the wine; while at Eryx the arrival and the departure of Aphrodite was signified by the arrival and the departure of doves.[230] This particular form of divine manifestation where the divine presence can be synecdochically inferred by the presentation of one of the divine attributes, a piece of the divine paraphernalia, footwear, or even a piece of the divine body, is what I call here a *pars pro toto* epiphany. I prefer the Latin term *pars pro toto* to the Greek *synecdochē* because it delivers better this idea of a deity (whole) signified by its symbol (part). Besides, the Greek *synecdochē* has a double meaning: it can mean either a) the inference of the whole from the part, or b) the inference of the part from the whole, and I am only interested in the first connection.[231]

As I mentioned earlier, Sicilian Eryx provides us with a good example of a *pars pro toto* epiphany:[232] in the local advent festival of Aphrodite (Venus Erucina) called Anagogia the departure of a flock of doves signifies Aphrodite's departure from Sicily to Libya; while nine days later, the return of the doves heralding Aphrodite's return is celebrated in the corresponding advent festival of Katagogia.[233] That doves have been closely associated with Aphrodite in iconography and in cult on a Panhellenic level hardly needs any further discussion;[234] what is of importance here is that, within this specific cultic context of an advent festival, Aphrodite's divine body has been abbreviated (in a culturally meaningful way for its perceivers) and represented by the bodies of the doves. In other words, the birds symbolize the presence or the absence of the goddess's body.[235] In the

[230] More on Aphrodite and her doves very shortly; for Dionysus' wine epiphanies see the discussion of metonymy epiphanies below.

[231] Cf. Tryphon, *Peri tropon*, s.v. *περὶ συνεκδοχῆς*.

[232] Aelian, the connoisseur of epiphanic manifestations, who authored the general study on epiphanies (*Περὶ θείων ἐναργειῶν*), provides us with information on this particular festival in his *NA* 4.2; cf. also his *VH* 1.15. Cf. also Athen. *Deipn.* 9.394e = Charon of Lampsacus *FGrHist* 262 F3.

[233] For Anagogia being an epiphanic festival see chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[234] E.g. Ar. *Av.* 514ff., Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 379d.5, etc.

[235] Is this a zoomorphic epiphany? Both the Greek and the plural number of the birds do not encourage us to think so. Certainly, it would not have been of great significance for the Greeks, who would not distinguish between the two categories anyway. At the end of the day, it is not of great

Theban festival of Daphnēphoria, on the other hand, held in honour of Apollo Daphnēphoros, it is the carrying of a laurel branch, Apollo's sacred plant, which signifies the advent of the god.[236] The laurel branch is perceived and celebrated as an abbreviation for the presence of the god. Perhaps it was even perceived as the tangible proof of the god's actual visitation. Examples like those just mentioned do not imply that doves or laurel branches are, as a whole, perceived as divine manifestations of Aphrodite and Apollo respectively. It is within the specific cultic context of these festivals, in particular, that these animals and plants acquire a further signification; they become signifiers of the divine presence.

Another striking example of a *pars pro toto* representation of the divine presence in the context of an advent festival comes from Hellenistic Alexandria: the κάλαθος ('basket') containing the *hiera* becomes the signifier of Demeter's presence, as it is paraded through the streets of the city, accompanied by hymns and prayers that invoke Demeter to manifest herself.[237] The *kalathos* was a basket with a narrow base and wide brim containing the sacred things and thus protecting them from the sight of the impure (βέβαλοι). It was most popular with the cults of Gaia, Horai, Tyche, etc. in the East. In the West its cultic equivalent was the κίστη, a container of ritual objects most commonly used in the mystery cults of Dionysus and Demeter.[238]

Naturally enough, the Athenian procession with Demeter's *hiera* carried within *kistai* from Eleusis and back springs to mind. On this particular cultic occasion, as in the Alexandrian festival, it was the arrival of *ta hiera*, Demeter's sacred objects, that was identified with Demeter's arrival, as has been suggested by Sourvinou-Inwood.[239] This interpretation of the 'arrival' of the *hiera* as a *pars pro toto* (Sourvinou-Inwood does not use this term) advent of Demeter to Athens can be further supported by the itinerary followed by the sacred procession that escorted the 'sacred things' to Athens: each year, before they arrived at Athens, they would stop at a suburb known as the Sacred Fig Tree (Ἱερὰ συκῆ), commemorating thus

significance to us either; all that matters is to establish that both zoomorphic and *pars pro toto* representations of the divine were, for the Greeks, equally legitimate strategies of representing the divine. On the partial overlapping of the *pars pro toto* epiphanies that involve sacred animals with the zoomorphic ones, see my discussion in the 'Zoomorphic epiphany: animal-like gods' section below.

[236] Pind. *Frs*. 94b, 94c, 104b; Paus. 9.10.4; Phot. *Bibl*. 239.321bff.

[237] The scene is illustrated on Alexandrian coins dated to the 2nd cent. AD. See Burkert (1986, 85, fig. 5), who draws a parallel with another much earlier (4th–3rd cent. BC) coin depicting a female bust carried on a chariot. See the *Catalogue of the Coins of Alexandria and the Nomes in the British Museum*, 66–7, pls 552 and 553. Cahen maintains (in his edition of the Callimachus' hymns) that the scenes on the coins are figurative and not relevant to any specific cultic occasion. This is negated by the inscription on one of them, which reads: '13 years', i.e. for Trian's birthday. Cf. Call. *Hymn*. 6.1–6 with Burkert (1986, 85) and West (*CR* 36, 1986, 28); contra: Hopkinson ad loc. (1984) *Callimachus' Hymn to Demeter*, Cambridge, who asserts that the cultic context of the hymn is figurative, i.e. the hymn does not refer to a specific festival.

[238] Note here that both a *kalathos* and a *kistē* are mentioned in the so-called Eleusinian *synthema*, as reported by Clem. Al. *Protr*. 2.21.2: κἄστι τὸ σύνθημα Ἐλευσινίων μυστηρίων· 'ἐνήστευσα, ἔπιον τὸν κυκεῶνα, ἔλαβον ἐκ κίστης, ἐργασάμενος ἀπεθέμην εἰς κάλαθον καὶ ἐκ καλάθου εἰς κίστην.' Καλά γε τὰ θεάματα καὶ θεᾷ πρέποντα.

[239] Sourvinou- Inwood (2003a).

the goddess's journey and the stops she made on her way to Athens.[240] According to Pausanias, it was here that Demeter gave the Athenian king Phytalos a fig tree in exchange for her *xenismos*. This detail confirms our hypothesis that the itinerary of the procession that escorted the *hiera* from Eleusis to Athens was made to match Demeter's original advent to Athens while wandering in search of Kore.

In all probability, these sacred objects (were those the gifts that the goddess gave to Keleos and his family to reciprocate for her *xenismos*?)[241] were revealed to the *mystai* at a climactic point of the initiatory process within the megaron. The Eleusinian *hiera*, then, would have thus become, at some point in the initiation, the objects of solemn ritual viewing.

The throne of Zeus becoming an object of ritual viewing, as recorded by Porphyry, is yet another comparable example of a *pars pro toto* epiphany in a cultic context. The throne of Zeus was apparently viewed by Pythagoras in the course of his initiation by some of the *mystai* of Morgos, one of the Idaean Dactyls.[242] Having been purified Pythagoras laid face foremost near the sea for a whole night, wore a wreath of black wool, and went down into the cave of Idaean Zeus, where he spent eighteen days. When he finally emerged he was allowed to view the throne that every year was ritually prepared for Zeus (*τόν τε στορνύμενον αὐτῷ κατ' ἔτος θρόνον ἐθεάσατο*). The point is that 'after all these solemnities the final apocalypse of an empty throne falls rather flat', as Jane Harrison puts it bluntly.[243] She then assumes that the throne was occupied not by Zeus himself, nor by a human being pretending to be the god, but by the thunderbolt, Zeus' almighty symbol of authority. What I hope to show here is that such an assertion is hardly necessary. Viewing the throne of Zeus, which was annually prepared to receive the god, was more than enough. Zeus' epiphany was not thwarted by this minimalistic representational strategy, precisely because the god's presence was signified by his throne.[244]

Diodorus informs us that the same representational strategy had to be utilized by Eumenes to fend off opposition in the vicious world of the Hellenistic Epigonoi. Alexander's throne, he says, was indeed situated in the midst of the royal *skēnē* in the Macedonian camp and it signified Alexander's presence in the eyes of

[240] See relevant discussion of this theoxenic episode in chapter 7, 'Demeter's *parousia* and political rivalry'. On the location of the Sacred Fig Tree, see Philostr. *Vit. Soph*. 2.20 and Paus.1.37.2.

[241] This suggestion ties up really well with Hipp. *Ref. Her*. 5.8.39: 'the Athenians performing the Eleusinian initiations and displaying to the *epoptai* the great and marvellous and perfect *epoptic* mystery, in silence, a reaped ear of corn'.

[242] Porph. *Vit. Pyth*. 17 De Place. On the sources and structure of Porphyry's *Vita Pythagorae*, see Staab (2002, 109–34).

[243] Harrison (1963, 58). In support of her argument, she adduces two coins from Seleukeia (fig. 7), on which a throne is occupied by a stylized sceptre in the shape of thunderbolt. Ingenious though it may be, the link between our passage and Harrison's iconographical evidence is tentative and remains unsupported by the Greek.

[244] Perhaps the whole ritual of draping the throne of the god was an abbreviated ritual of *xenismos*, where the god is expected to be received and entertained by his worshippers. Note that the verb used in our passage (*stornymai*) is also used in several other cases of ritual *xenismos*. More on the terminology of *xenia* in the introductory section of chapter 7. To be sure, it is usually a table or a couch that is draped for the occasion, never a throne; on the other hand, this is quite a special occasion, since Zeus is also a monarch, for whom a throne is appropriate.

the Macedonian army.[245] The reason why this throne came to be is simple enough: confronted with the ruthless and potentially life-threatening rivalry among the rest of the military officials of the camp, Eumenes—the only non-Macedonian to be appointed to a leading command in 323 BC—claimed that Alexander manifested himself in his sleep and ordered him to establish his throne and set the royal insignia on top of it. The throne according to the same prophetic dream was to be placed in a tent specially built for King Eumenes. From that point onwards, all the important decisions concerning the future of the army would have to take place within this specially assigned tent presided over by Alexander's throne, the *pars pro toto* epiphany of the dead god-king.

In fact, *pars pro toto* representations of the divine presence proved to be immensely popular with military and political leaders from the Classical to the Imperial era and beyond. Abbreviating the divine body by presenting a fraction of it, its traces, or its paraphernalia was, I suppose, the easiest and quickest way to denote divine presence and make claims on divine alliance; it required a minimum of effort, and few resources. Archidamus' staging of a *pars pro toto* epiphany of the Dioscuri was one such case.[246] In his attempt to raise the spirits of his soldiers before the battle of Dipaea, Archidamus secretly built an altar and decorated it with new gleaming arms, or so we are told by Polyaenus, who collected examples of military and political ruses known as *stratēgēmata*.[247] Afterwards, the Spartan leader brought two horses around the altar to mark the ground with their hoof prints, thus implying that the Dioscuri (often depicted as a pair of youths riding on white horses, as in Fig. 7.1) were to fight along with the rest of the Spartan army against the Arcadians. The next day the other military leaders and the soldiers were delighted to find this most evident proof of the imminent divine alliance. A similar hoof print that belonged to Castor's horse was shown imprinted yet again on a rock near the lake Regillus, where the Dioscuri are said to have assisted the Romans accomplish their famous victory.[248]

A ploy comparable to that used by Archidamus was used also by Epaminondas in the battle of Leuctra (371 BC).[249] The aim was once again to claim divine alliances and thus raise the spirits of the disheartened Thebans. According to Polyaenus, Epaminondas' staging of the *pars pro toto* epiphany of Herakles was carried out with the consent and the assistance of Herakles' priest: the priest and the temple attendants having opened the doors of the temple, and having cautiously cleaned the sacred weaponry, left the place surreptitiously in the middle of the night.[250] The next day the Theban army was met with a wondrous spectacle: the newly polished gleaming weapons of Herakles were strategically placed in front of the statue of the god, thus implying that the god was out there fighting on their side and even leading the battle as their general.

[245] The colourful story is preserved by Diod. Sic. 18.6–61. For more see Shipley (2000, 46ff.).

[246] Polyaen. 1.41.1; Front. 1.11.9.

[247] In 467 BC. Dipaia is in Arcadia.

[248] Cic. *DND* 3.11; *Cotta: ergo et illud in silice quod hodie apparet apud Regillum tamquam vestigium ungulae Castoris equi credis esse?* Cf. also Val. Max. 1.8.1; Cic. *DND* 2.6, Dion. Hal. 6.13, Plut. *Cor.* 3.4, Aem. Paul. 25.2–4, Florus 1.5.4, etc.

[249] Diod. Sic. 15.53.4.

[250] Polyaen. 2.3.8.

Now, in Xenophon's account the content of this decisive strategic intervention differs substantially in that the event is only vaguely attributed to the Thebans' military leaders and Epaminondas is not named as the main culprit.[251] More importantly, the miraculous opening of the doors (here of all the temples, not simply of that of the Herakleion) was marked not by the appearance, but by the disappearance of Herakles' sacred weapons (*τὰ ὅπλα ἔφασαν ἀφανῆ εἶναι*)—the implication being that Herakles had already taken them out in preparation for the imminent battle. Interestingly enough, in Diodorus' version (which reconciles the previous two versions) the *ἀφάνισις* of Herakles' weapons (*τὰ κατὰ τὸν νεὼν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ὅπλα παραδόξως ἀφανῆ γέγονε*) is portrayed as Epaminondas' contrivance. This last example reminds us that quite often it is not the presence of a divine symbol but its absence that carries extra weight in the consciousness of the contemporary community of the epiphany's perceivers. The reader is reminded here of the vanishing of Athena's sacred snake (*ὃς ἀφανὴς ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκ τοῦ σηκοῦ δοκεῖ γενέσθαι*) from the acropolis and how this event was equated with the goddess's deserting the city.[252] In the eyes of its contemporaries the vanishing of Athena's sacred snake epitomized not divine presence and support, but the very opposite.[253]

In summary, up to this point we have seen how the divine presence can be epitomized by the deity's sacred plant, animal, weaponry, and the divine paraphernalia in general. Nowhere, though, is this synecdochic relationship more obvious than in the case of the footprints of gods and heroes. Indeed, there are numerous narratives in which divine footprint(s) seem to deliver most effectively the message of divine bodily presence.[254] Herakles and Dionysus, in particular, are often presented as leaving their traces behind to materialize and perpetuate their divine epiphany for posterity.[255] Herodotus, we are told, was shown in the vicinity of the river Tyras (Scythia) Herakles' footprint stamped on the rock: 'it looked like the mark of a man's foot, but it was two cubits in length'.[256]

The same author reported that in Chemmis, in Egyptian Thebes, Perseus was often seen wandering around the land, and that he was a regular visitor to his own temple. The tangible material proof for these divine visitations was Perseus' sandal, which kept turning up to be seen by the people of Chemmis.[257] Perseus' footwear, just like Herakles' at the banks of the river Tyras, was two cubits long, and whenever it appeared it meant prosperity for the whole land of Egypt. Perseus' *epidemia*, i.e. his periodic manifestation, entailed prosperity for the whole of Egypt and was celebrated in a particularly Greek way, as the historian emphatically remarks: athletic games and sacrifices were established in honour of the god, who in Herodotus' eyes was

[251] Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.7.

[252] See Hdt. 8.41; Plut. *Them.* 10.1–2.

[253] For Athena and the snake as her sacred animal, Erichthonios, see Garland (1992, 122); and Schol. *ad Il.* 1.138. The snake was identified variously with Erichthonios or the hero Erechtheus (cf. Paus. 1.24.7; Ar. *Lys.* 159). The temple mentioned in the narrative was probably the Erechtheum.

[254] Petridou (2009) with bibliography.

[255] E.g. [Aristot.] *Mirab. Ausc.* 97.838: *λέγουσι δὲ πολλαχοῦ τῆς Ἰταλίας Ἡρακλέους εἶναι πολλὰ μνημόσυνα ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς ἃς ἐκεῖνος ἐπορεύθη. περὶ δὲ Πανδοσίαν τῆς Ἰαπυγίας ἴχνη τοῦ θεοῦ δείκνυται, ἐφ' ἃ οὐδενὶ ἐπιβατέον.*

[256] Hdt. 4.82: *ἴχνος Ἡρακλέος φαίνουσι ἐν πέτρῃ ἐνεόν, τὸ ἔοικε μὲν βήματι ἀνδρός, ἔστι δὲ τὸ μέγαθος δίπηχυ, παρὰ τὸν Τύρην ποταμόν.*

[257] Hdt. 2.91.

equated with the Egyptian god 'Men' or 'Chem' (the hieroglyph can be read both ways), whom the Greeks identified with the ithyphallic Pan.[258]

The footprints of Herakles and Dionysus become the object of ritual viewing and *proskynēsis* in Lucian's *True Story*.[259] The travelling party found in the woods a stele of bronze with the following inscription: 'up to this point came Herakles and Dionysus'. Nearby they also saw two footprints inscribed in stone, the one a hundred feet long, and the other smaller. The larger one they attributed to Herakles and the smaller one to Dionysus. The characters on the inscription were faded and obliterated: undoubtedly a clear sign of the inscription's antiquity and gravitas. In both narratives (that of Herodotus and that of Lucian) the word *ichnos*/*e* describes the visual representation of footprint(s) inscribed on stone/rock; and the wording is almost identical. To be precise, *ichnos* can denote both foot and footprint.[260] In both cases, the footprints of the deities are of extraordinary size, thus reflecting the supernatural nature of those who left them behind. Moreover, in both narratives these divine footprints are interpreted as material traces of the deity's divine visitation. The deity was there, they seem to be saying, and (s)he touched the ground with their feet.

Notwithstanding its humorous overtones, Lucian's narrative is informed by earlier literary sources (like the aforementioned passage from Herodotus) or contemporary religious practices and artefacts, or both. The stream of wine, for instance, that the travellers find and interpret as a sign of Dionysus' *epidēmia* derives from the attested festivals in honour of Dionysus, such the Elean Thyia, where the miraculous finding of wine is read as the visible sign of the god's visitation, or Dionysus' festival in Andros, where on the day of the celebration wine is seen pouring out of the temple on its own accord.[261] More importantly,

[258] See How and Wells' commentary ad loc.

[259] Luc. *VH* 1.7: *προελθόντες δὲ ὅσον σταδίους τρεῖς ἀπὸ τῆς θαλάττης δι' ὕλης ὁρῶμέν τινα στήλην χαλκοῦ πεποιημένην, Ἑλληνικοῖς γράμμασιν καταγεγραμμένην, ἀμυδροῖς δὲ καὶ ἐκτετριμμένοις, λέγουσαν Ἄχρι τούτων Ἡρακλῆς καὶ Διόνυσος ἀφίκοντο. ἦν δὲ καὶ ἴχνη δύο πλησίον ἐπὶ πέτρας, τὸ μὲν πλεθριαῖον, τὸ δὲ ἔλαττον—ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν, τὸ μὲν τοῦ Διονύσου, τὸ μικρότερον, θάτερον δὲ Ἡρακλέους. προσκυνήσαντες δ' οὖν προῆμεν· οὔπω δὲ πολὺ παρῆμεν καὶ ἐφιστάμεθα ποταμῷ οἶνον ῥέοντι ὁμοιότατον μάλιστα οἷόσπερ ὁ Χίος ἐστιν. ἄφθονον δὲ ἦν τὸ ῥεῦμα καὶ πολύ, ὥστε ἐνιαχοῦ καὶ ναυσίπορον εἶναι δύνασθαι. ἐπῆει οὖν ἡμῖν πολὺ μᾶλλον πιστεύειν τῷ ἐπὶ τῆς στήλης ἐπιγράμματι, ὁρῶσι τὰ σημεῖα τῆς Διονύσου ἐπιδημίας.* A festival of analogous character is also attested by Theopompos of Chios *FGrHist* 115, Fr. 277; and by Diodorus Siculus 3.66.2.

[260] *ichnos* as foot: Eur. *Ba.* 1134; Heliod. *Aeth.* 7.8.7 (feet of the statue of Isis): *ὁ Καλάσιρις ῥίπτει μὲν ἑαυτὸν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον τοῖς δὲ ἴχνεσι προσφὺς τοῦ ἀγάλματος*; vestigium as foot: Apul. *Met.* 11.5ff. (ambiguous reference: feet of Isis or feet of the statue of Isis): *exosculatis vestigiis deae, quae gradibus haerebat argento formata.* Cf. also Guarducci (1974, 74), and Henrichs (1968, 70, n. 62). *ichnos* as footprint: *Il.* 13.71ff. (footprints of Poseidon); *Od.* 2.406ff., 3.30, and 7.38 (Athena's footprints); *Od.* 5.193 (Calypso's footprints); *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 220, 342, and 351 (footprints of baby Hermes); Hdt. 4.82 (Herakles' footprint); Call. *Hymn.* 6.5 (Kore's footprints); Luc. *VH* 1.7 (the footprints of Herakles and Dionysus); [Arist.] *Mirab. Ausc.* 97.838 (Herakles' footprint); Diod. Sic. 4.24.1–3 (Herakles' footprints); vestigium as footprint: Cic. *DND* 3.11(footprints of Dioscuri): *ergo et illud in silice quod hodie apparet apud Regillum tamquam vestigium ungulae Castoris equi credis esses?*; Val. Max. 1.8.1 (footprints of Dioscuri), etc. More examples in Kötting, RAC s.v. 'Fuss'.

[261] Pausanias, who describes both festivals in the same section, informs us of yet another festival in honour of Dionysus on mount Larysion (Paus. 3.22.2), where a miraculous finding of a bunch of grapes is read as a sign of the god's visitation. The festival is attested in the writings of Theopompos of Chios *FGrHist* 115, Fr. 277.

when presenting Herakles and Dionysus' footprint inscribed in stone in conjunction with the bronze stele, which informed the visitor of the two gods' epiphany, Lucian draws undoubtedly from an extremely popular representational strategy, whereby divine feet, footprints, and footwear as architectural objects or inscribed in metal or stone were used to denote synecdochically, to epitomize, to abbreviate, if you will, the divine presence on earth, and, thus, to materialize and preserve for posterity the moment that the divine body comes in contact with the terrestrial ground. This phenomenon has an extremely large number of cross-cultural parallels and it is widespread in the whole of the Mediterranean basin.[262]

Lucian's mocked-up inscription calls to mind the actual *ichnos* inscriptions, that is the inscriptions which feature the word *ichnos* and other semantically similar terms such as *bēma*, *podes*, etc. One such example is depicted in Fig. 1.2. Four different people, amongst them Pyrgias the *aretalogos*, dedicated two footprints to Isis and Anubis.[263] The dedication took place at some god's command; we cannot read his name on the fragmentary inscription. Dittenberger supplies Sarapis, which seems possible, although we cannot exclude the possibility of reading Isidos either. An *aretalogos* was the equivalent of a modern expert on epiphanies and miraculous acts in general. Isis, Sarapis, and Asclepius were most often the recipients of these accounts, poetic in form, of miraculous deeds of a deity, which were called aretalogies.

An *aretalogos,* though, would not simply compose elaborate epiphanic accounts, he would also try to make sense of them. In other words, an *aretalogos* was the religious specialist who would interpret miraculous events and decipher unexpected noises, voices, and reveal the true meaning of all these to the community; this is why in another inscription from Delos an *aretalogos* is side by side with an *oneirokritēs*; the first is the one who interprets the visions in the waking life and the second the one who interprets the divine signs sent whilst asleep.[264] But because an *aretalogos* would try to make his account of the divine manifestations appealing by adding extraordinary details and even literary motifs common

[262] Footprints are read as signs of divine presence in a wide range of cultural traditions and civilizations: Buddha's footprints, for instance, are shown in Prabat in Siam and in Ceylon; while the footprints of the Prophet himself are shown in the Museum of the Topkapi palace in Istanbul and elsewhere. Moving on to the Judeo-Christian tradition, the divine footprints of Yahweh were shown at his Iron Age Temple of Ain Dara in Syria; while Jesus' footprints were also left behind in various places at various moments of crisis during his lifetime: e.g. a pair of footprints were left when he was still a baby, and further pairs when he stood in front of Pilate, in Gethsemane, and at his Ascension, at his tomb in Kashmir in India, and, most famously, at the Chiesa di Santa Maria in Palmis, better known as Chiesa del Domine Quo Vadis. More on this kind of monument can be found in Guarducci (1942–3) and (1974) and Castiglione (1967), (1968), and (1970), who has focused more on the foot-shaped artefacts from Egypt. Dunbabin's (1990) survey, on the other hand, focuses more on artistic representations of foot and footprints in the Graeco-Roman world. For an exhaustive list of artefacts of similar character in Italy and Spain, see Canto (1984). Finally, Weniger (1923–4), Henrichs (1968), Fauth (1985–6), and Kötting (1972) and (1983) pay adequate attention to comparative material from literary sources. On *ichnos*-related inscriptions, see Petridou (2009).

[263] This inscription from the Serapeion C of Delos (Museum of Delos, no. inv. A 585) is dated to 166 BC. See *RICIS* 202/0186 with Bricault's commentary, where more bibliography can be found. On *aretalogos* see Reitzenstein, *Hellenistischen Wundererzählungen* (esp. 265); Henrichs (1978); Winkler (1991, 235–8), where he criticizes Reitzenstein's account of *aretalogia*); Longo (1969); Sokolowski (1974); Dignas (2008); Gasparini (2011); and, more recently, Jördens (2013, esp. 146–8).

[264] Cf. Strabo 17.1.17: *συγγράφουσι δέ τινες καὶ τὰς θεραπείας, ἄλλοι δὲ ἀρετὰς τῶν ἐνταῦθα λογίων.*

Fig. 1.2. An *ichnos*-inscription. The inscription which frames the artefact reads: *Πυργίας ἀρεταλόγος / κατὰ π[ρ]όσταγ[μα Σαράπι (?)]ος τὸ βῆμα. / [- - -] μυρις, Μαιανδία, Σησάμη / Ἴσι, Ἀνούβι*, 'Pyrgias the aretalogue on Sarapis' command (has dedicated) this footprint. [. . .]myris, Maiandria, Sēsame, to Isis (and) Anoubis'. *RICIS* 202/0186 (plate XVVI) = *I. Délos* 1236 = IG XI 1263. Votive inscription from the Serapeion C of Delos (A 585), which depicts a pair of votive footprints.

in other literary genres, the term ended up meaning an expert who would not simply interpret the miraculous stories of the divine epiphany, but also the one who fabricates them. At any rate, what matters in this case is that Pyrgias the *aretalogos*, a professional, an expert on composing artistic catalogues of divine manifestations, was somehow instructed (in a dream? through an oracle?) to dedicate this *bēma* to Isis and Anubis. Guarducci's interpretation is equally plausible; she thinks that the footprints belong to Sarapis (a god, whose feet bring luck, well-being, prosperity, health) and represent the god's beneficiary presence for the community.[265]

[265] Guarducci (1942–3, 313–14).

These *ichnos* inscriptions accompany material objects shaped like feet, footprints, or footwear. These inscriptional *ichnē* or *ichnia* oscillate between textual and material representations of the divine body, being words, or formulaic syntactical structures, inscribed on stone, marble, metal etc. and yet accompanying material evidence (sculpted feet, footwear, or inscribed footprints); thus these inscriptional *ichnē* are destined to be 'read' in conjunction with the visual material. These inscriptions, even in the absence of architectural artefacts, evoke in the mind of the viewer a complex nexus of firmly established cultural links between feet and divine presence, enable the dedicant to capture this elusive moment of divine presence, and the viewer to recreate it. In that sense these *ichnos* inscriptions function as means of materializing the divine body.

The formulaic structure 'appear with your (qualifying adjective) foot' appears repeatedly in conjunction with what we call performative utterances like all those imperatives that mean 'come', 'appear', 'manifest yourself' (like *βᾶθι*, *ἐλθέ*, *φάνηθι*, *ἔρχου*, *ἵκοῦ*, *ἴθι*, *βάσκε*, *προφάνητε*, *κτλ.*) in several cletic hymns—both literary and cultic, if such distinction is indeed sustainable—and prayers.[266] In my view, this is yet another indication of how widespread this concept of divine feet and footprints as indicators of divine presence was. It is as if humans tried to control where, or even how, i.e. with what disposition, the god will appear by mentioning or qualifying his foot with startling and appropriate epithets.

Unsurprisingly enough, Dionysus' foot comes first in the list of most-invoked feet: thus the chorus in Sophocles' *Antigone* invokes the god to come to the plague-stricken Thebes with his cathartic foot (*μολεῖν καθαρσίῳ ποδί*, 1142). The urgency of the appeal is intensified at line 1148, which directly asks for the manifestation of the god: *παῖ Διὸς γένεθλον προφάνηθι*. Likewise the dancing chorus in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae* (985ff.) invokes Dionysus to come and lead their dance, while the jovial chorus of *thiasōtes* in Aristophanes' *Frogs* invokes Iacchus to join them with his bold foot (*θρασεῖ ποδί*) and tread a measure among the *mystai* on their way to Eleusis. To be sure, Iacchus is not identical to Dionysus, but he is closely associated with the god. Dionysus' zoomorphic foot (ox foot) is in the foreground in the cletic hymn the women of Elis used to sing during the festival of Thyia, thus invoking the god to appear in his zoomorphic manifestation, as a bull.[267]

Precisely because feet, footwear, and footprints are so firmly woven together with the concept of the divine presence, they are cases where they signify departure from the human world and therefore immortality: while in Sicily and having already established Kore's *katagōgē* or *katagōgia* ritual in lake Cyane, Herakles visited Agyrium, Diodorus' native city, where something extraordinary happened: Herakles' cattle left their footprints on a rocky road, as if the road was made of wax (*αἱ βόες τὰ ἴχνη καθάπερ ἐπὶ κηροῦ τινος ἀπετυποῦντο*).[268] The same thing, we are told, happened to Herakles, signifying thus his entrance into the sphere of immortality (*νομίσας ἤδη τι λαμβάνειν τῆς ἀθανασίας, προσεδέχετο τὰς τελουμένας ὑπὸ τῶν ἐγχωρίων κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν θυσίας*). Herakles, having realized he was becoming immortal, finally accepted the people's honours (festivities and

[266] On performative utterances see Versnel (1981, 29) and Tambiah (1985, 17ff.). Garçia (2002) rightly casts doubt on the validity and the usefulness of this distinction.

[267] Soph. *Ant.* 1142; Ar. *Thesm.* 985 (*Ἀλλ' εἶα, πάλλ', ἀνάστρεφ' εὐρύθμῳ ποδί*); Ar. *Ran.* 330–1 (*θρασεῖ δ' ἐγκατακρούων ποδὶ*); Plut. *Qu.Gr.* 36 S 299 Titchener = *Anth. Lyr.* Diehl II p. 206.

[268] Diod. Sic. 4.24.1–3.

sacrifices), which he had previously denied. What is of interest here is that the footprints of both Herakles and his cattle are left on a rocky surface (*ὁδοῦ . . . πετρώδους*) and that these footprints are characterized as immortal memorials of Herakles' *parousia*, which is a synonym of *epiphaneia* (*ἀθάνατα μνημεῖα τῆς ἑαυτοῦ παρουσίας*). Herakles, who becomes immortal, leaves behind immortal footprints.

But perhaps the most well-known passage in which divine feet and footprints denote the presence of divinity is to be found in *Iliad* 13.[269] Poseidon, in the guise of Calchas, appears to the two Aiantes to encourage them and give them strength. After his departure, which in its swiftness is compared to that of a hawk, the lesser Ajax says to his half-brother:

> 'Aias, this is one of the gods, who hold Olympus,
> who in the likeness of a seer (*μάντεϊ εἰδόμενος*) urges us to fight near the ships,
> he is not Calchas, the prophet and the reader of omens,
> for easily I recognized the traces he left behind, the traces of his feet and legs
> (*ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων*)
> as he went away for gods are easy to be identified
> (*ῥεῖ᾽ ἔγνων ἀπιόντος· ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοί περ*).'[270]

What the two Aiantes saw and what *ichnia* means in line 71 are two issues that have been variously approached by scholars both ancient and modern: Dirlmeier and Michel read *ichnia* as 'movements', while Fränkel reads 'footprints'.[271] Two ancient authors offer alternative interpretations: Heliodorus takes *ῥεῖα* with *ἀπιόντος*, not with *ἔγνων*, meaning that the god 'went very quickly', as a hawk;[272] Aias, therefore, recognized the god from his swift movement. Eustathios likewise reads *ῥεῖα* with *ἀπιόντος*, but understands that Poseidon left no footprints behind and enabled Aias to guess his divine identity.[273]

In any case, whether Aias recognizes the god from his swift movement (with Heliodorus) or from his footprints (with Fränkel) or even from the absence of his footprints (Eustathios), the hero focuses on one detail of the divine body he encounters: the feet. Regardless of whether they perceived swift movement, larger footprints, or no footprints at all, they perceived signs of the 'otherness' (to use Vernant's terminology) of the being, which confronted them. Whether with faster feet, larger footprints, or no footprints at all, Poseidon's epiphany contains elements that are the opposite of Aias' human nature and are, therefore, divine. Whether larger than human size or totally absent, divine footprints reflect the divine nature of their owners. The antithesis between mortals and immortals is expressed as either ordinary-sized feet or footprints vs. extraordinary-sized feet or footprints or footprints *in praesentia* vs. footprints *in absentia*.

[269] Cf. also the formulaic syntactical structure: *ὁ δ᾽ ἔπειτα μετ᾽ ἴχνια βαῖνε θεοῖο*, which appears repeatedly in the Odyssey: 2.406 (Telemachus & Athena in Ithaca); 3.30 (Telemachus & Athena in Pylos); 5.193 (Odysseus & Calypso); *Od.* 7.38 (Odysseus & Athena).

[270] *Il.* 13.68–72. [271] Dirlmeier (1967, 57); Michel (1971, 35); Fränkel (1921, 81).

[272] Heliod. *Aeth.* 3.11.5ff. The phrase according to Heliodorus refers to the way the gods walk, sliding through as if carried by some force, without moving their feet. The writer illustrates his argument by commenting on the way the Egyptians represent the feet of the gods on their statues as stuck together not separated asunder.

[273] *Schol. Il.* 13.71 Erbse.

Now I turn to a subcategory of *pars pro toto* epiphanies which I call 'metonymy epiphanies', and discuss a number of what I take to be paradigmatic metonymy epiphanies. The term 'metonymy epiphany' refers to an epiphany in which the object made to appear bears a metonymic relationship to the deity involved. A metonymy epiphany is, for instance, when Dionysus manifests himself as wine; when Demeter or Kore manifest themselves as wheat or an ear of corn or even as flour; or when the Muses appear as bees, which were traditionally associated with poetry and wisdom. Metonymy epiphanies are examined as a subcategory of the *pars pro toto* epiphanies, for they do not involve the whole of the divine body, but only a fraction, in particular, a fraction of the divine substance; or better a symbol of the divine sphere of influence, e.g. Dionysus presides over viticulture and manifests himself as wine; or Demeter and Kore preside over agriculture and communication between the subterranean and supraterranean levels, and may manifest themselves as wheat or as an ear of corn.

By metonymy we usually mean the rhetorical or metaphorical substitution of one word for another that it suggests. This substitution of one word for another—e.g. we say 'the crown' instead of 'the monarch'—in order to be communicable to the rest of the speakers must be based on an easily recognizable semantic association. Examples of metonymic substitution (*μετωνυμία*) of the names of Greek deities with symbols or substances with which they were closely associated in the mind of their contemporaries abound in the writings of the ancient lexicographers,[274] scholiasts,[275] and grammarians.[276] Needless to say, Greek does not have a special word to denote a metonymy epiphany, but as with *epiphaneia*, the concept seems to be there, without having to be expressed with a particular technical term. A more detailed discussion of some examples of metonymy epiphanies will, hopefully, demonstrate amply that this subcategory is not an example of gratuitous and artificial pigeonholing, but a necessary measure to keep our definition both methodologically sound and closely grounded to Greek religious practice and views on the divine manifestation.

Honey is for honeysweet poetry, bees are for honeysweet Muses

Ἡσιόδ⌋ῳ Μουσέων ἑσμὸ⌊ς ὅτ' ἠντίασεν
Call. fr. *Aet.* Fr. 2

Bee epiphanies are the metonymic variant of epiphanic narratives that feature the Muses manifesting themselves to men of wisdom and eloquence.[277] Poets and prophets were traditionally compared to bees and their voices were thought to be

[274] E.g. Suda s.v. *μετωνυμικῶς*, Hesych. s.v. *Ἥφαιστος*.
[275] E.g. Schol. ad *Il.* 19.119a; *Od.* 1.103–40.
[276] E.g. Tryphon, *Peri Tropon* 195, 196.
[277] For a link between wisdom and honey see, among others, two passages from Nonnus *Dion.* (41.217–20; 41.250–3). see also chapter 4, 'Epiphanies initiating poetry' and 'Epiphanies moulding *ars poetica*'.

as sweet as honey.[278] In a number of sources a parallel is drawn between the words *melos* ('song') and *meli* ('honey') and those who produce them.[279] In a charming poem from *Anthologia Palatina*, Euterpe is depicted as forcing the spirit of the skilled bee through the pierced reeds she is playing.[280] Both the Muses and the bees often feature together in phrases like *μέλιττα Μούσης*, or *Μουσέων ἑσμὸς*.[281]

Stories about poets and philosophers encountering bees at some point in their lives, usually in their early youth or even infancy, are a topos in Greek biographical writing. Bees are said to have appeared and produced honey or wax on the lips of numerous poets or men of letters: Pindar, Hesiod, Sophocles, Plato, Virgil, Lucan, Ambrose, and John Chrysostom (John of the golden mouth) are amongst the most famous.[282] These manifestations usually took place *in remotis* (i.e. typical epiphanic landscapes, isolated from human settlements), and usually during the hour of midday.[283] Quite often the interstitial character of midday is intensified by excessive and vision-inducing summer heat. It is also worth noting here that the perceiver of these epiphanies is often portrayed as asleep when the bees visit him (e.g. Pindar and Plato)—perhaps an indirect allusion to the metaphorical character of these manifestations, i.e. the bee epiphanies being the manifestations of poetic fervour and poetry itself. Philostratus in his *Imagines* (1.12) provides a detailed description of an iconographical representation of a bee epiphany, which illustrates the popularity of the metonymic relation between honeysweet poetry and honey-producing bees: Pindar is portrayed as an infant surrounded by a swarm of bees, who visited the poet 'so as to mould the baby from earliest childhood so that he may even now be inspired with harmony and music'.

There is an unmistakeable air of literary and artistic self-consciousness in these bee-epiphany narratives that we do not find in earlier authors featuring the Muses or the Charites as manifesting themselves to poets. One could possibly trace the beginning of the trend of substituting the Muses with their metonymic *simulacrum* in Hellenistic times; in particular, in Callimachus' account of the Muses' epiphany to Hesiod, where we find a combination of the two variants, the Muses epiphany and the bees epiphany: it is there that the poet is confronted with a swarm (*σμῆνος*) not of bees, but of Muses![284]

[278] For links between honey and divination, see *Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 252–63 (*Thriai* became mantic after eating honey) with Athanassakis (1976, 91) ad loc.; Ar. *Eccl.* 732; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.2; Cic. *De Div.* 1.34, etc. More on this issue in Nisetich (2001, 207).

[279] E.g. *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 519; Pind. Fr. 52, 58ff.; Call. *Hymn.* 2.131–4.

[280] *Anth. Pal.* 9. 505.5–6.

[281] See Ar. *Eccl.* 974–5; and Call. *Aet.* fr. 1, 21–8 Pf. respectively.

[282] Cf. for instance: *Vita Pind. Ambros. Scholia ad Ol.* ed. Drachmann; Paus. 9.23.2; Ael. *VH* 45; and Ael. *VH* 10.21 Hercher: *καθεύδοντι δὲ ἐσμὸς μελιττῶν ἐν τοῖς χείλεσιν αὐτοῦ καθίσασαι ὑπῆδον, τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος εὐγλωττίαν μαντευόμεναι ἐντεῦθεν*. For poetry and the Muses being associated with sweetness and honey see A. B. Cook (1895) 'The Bee in Greek Mythology' in *JHS* 5, 7–8 and Waszink (1974, 196).

[283] See my discussion in chapter 4, 'Epiphanic landscapes and interstitiality'.

[284] As quoted in the epigraph in the beginning of the section.

Dionysus is for wine, Demeter and Kore is for wheat, bread, and flour

> . . . καὶ καθόλου πάντα τὰ ὠφελοῦντα τὸν βίον ἡμῶν οἱ παλαιοὶ θεοὺς ἐνόμισαν διὰ τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ὠφέλειαν, . . . καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὸν μὲν ἄρτον Δήμητραν νομισθῆναι, τὸν δὲ οἶνον Διόνυσον, τὸ δὲ ὕδωρ Ποσειδῶνα, τὸ δὲ πῦρ Ἥφαιστον καὶ ἤδη τῶν εὐχρηστούντων ἕκαστον.
>
> Sext. Emp. *Adv. Math.* 9.18 = Diels. *Vors.* 84 (77) B5

Various literary genres exploit this metonymic identification of Dionysus with his sacred liquid, wine: when parodied it produces a supreme comic effect, while in an aetiological context, it offers a rationalistic explanation of the god's controversial cultic practice.[285] Ismene Lada-Richards argues that in the so-called introduction myths of Dionysus (narratives describing his (un)successful *xenismoi*) the god is closely identified with his sacred liquid.[286] Dionysus is the wine god; Dionysus is wine.[287]

Dionysus is the wine god in the Lenaean scene of Aristophanes' *Frogs* (22), when he is introduced as 'Dionysus, the son of the Wine Jar' (*Διόνυσος, υἱὸς Σταμνίου*). In Euripides' *Cyclops,* the wine god is imagined to be dwelling in vines, while in the *Bacchae* Teiresias' rationalist lecture on the semantics of Demeter and Dionysus reaches a climax with god and sacred liquid being tautological: 'him, being himself a god, is poured out in offering to the other gods, so that to him men owe all their blessings' (*Ba.* 284). The face of the god was painted on drinking jars and cups, like the famous amphora of Tarquinia, while several *oinochoē* vessels have the shape of the god himself holding a drinking vessel, like the Boston *oinochoē*.[288]

Having established that the metonymic relationship between Dionysus and wine was easily recognizable by the Greeks, let us now proceed with the cultic occasions where wine was equated with the god's presence. This metonymic identification of the wine god with his liquid is attested especially on a cultic level all over the Greek-speaking world. In the Elean festival of Thyia, for instance, the original advent of Dionysus was signified by the miraculous filling of three empty and sealed bronze jars with wine.[289] That the festival recreated the first arrival of the god is also illustrated by Theopompos' comments on Olympia being the first place to have hosted the vine tree. Pausanias adds another fascinating detail: the Eleans assert that the god regularly visits their festival (*καὶ τὸν θεόν*

[285] Parody: Eur. *Cycl.* 156, 454, 519–29; Ar. *Ran.* 22. *aition*: Eur. *Bacch.* 274–85, esp. 284–5. Dionysus on comic stage: Wilkins (2000, 202ff.).

[286] Lada-Richards (1999, 124). This connection is explored further in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[287] Compare here for instance Moschion, fr. 6.23ff. (*TGF* I, p. 814): *τόθ' ηὑρέθη μὲν καρπὸς ἡμέρου τροφῆς | Δήμητρος ἀγνῆς, ηὑρέθη δὲ Βακχίου | γλυκεῖα πηγή, κτλ.* Cf. also Pind. *Isthm.* 7.4–5: *ἦρα χαλκοκρότου πάρεδρον | Δαμάτερος ἀνίκ' εὐρυχαίταν | ἄντειλας Διόνυσον*; Schol. in Aratus' *Diosem.* 1068: *διὸ καὶ οἱ παλαιοὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τῇ Δήμητρι συγκαθιέρωσαν, αἰνιττόμενοι τὸ γόνιμον τῆς ὑγρότητος*; and inscriptional evidence as quoted by Vollgraf, *Mém. Acd. Ischr.* xiv (1951, 344) for connecting Demeter and Dionysus, bread and wine.

[288] Amphora of Tarquinia: *ABV* 275,5; Boston *oinochoe*: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 97, 377; Lada-Richards (1999, 127, figs 3.1 and 3.2 respectively).

[289] Plut. *Aetia Gr.* 299a; Theopompos of Chios *FGrHist* 115 Fr. 277.

σφισιν ἐπιφοιτᾶν ἐς τῶν Θυίων τὴν ἑορτὴν λέγουσιν).[290] The god was imagined to be both the protagonist and the guest in this festive occasion in his honour. In other words, in the advent festival of Thyia, Dionysus performed an annual metonymy epiphany: the god was present in the eyes of the celebrants in the form of his sacred liquid.

Similarly on Mount Larysion (near Gythion in Laconia), in the advent festival celebrated in honour of the wine god, the miraculous finding of a ripe bunch of grapes denoted metonymically the divine visitation;[291] and in Andros, during the god's advent festival, wine flew of its own accord (*αὐτόματον*) from his sanctuary denoting the god's presence, once again metonymically.[292] That wine was a symbol of divine presence can also be inferred from a passage from Diodorus, which explains how the Teans were at pains to support their claim that Dionysus did not simply visit but was actually born in their land: they would show the visitor a 'natural' fountain of wine of unusually sweet fragrance, which flows from the earth of its own accord. The freely running honeysweet wine thus became the eternal symbol of Dionysus' presence. When miraculous symbols of divine presence did not occur naturally, they were, quite often, fabricated: indeed archaeological excavations at the site proved that the natural fountain was simply the brainchild of the local priesthood![293] Cunning manipulations of the pious community's expectations set aside, what really matters here is that once again in the eyes of this community wine is identified with the wine god.

To be sure, presiding over viticulture is not Dionysus' only sphere of influence (theatre and the underworld being the two other major ones on a Panhellenic level), but it forms a major part of his divine persona;[294] it is also an element of his divine essence that was of cardinal importance to civilization. Between the wild vines and the refreshing wine lies Dionysus, the culture bringer;[295] between the raw meat and the civilized, shared dinner lies Herakles, the civilization bringer. A similar gap between nature and culture, between *physis* and *nomos*, is bridged by Demeter, the inventor of cereal, the crops that bear her name and formed the basis of the diet around the Mediterranean basin. Naturally enough, the Prodicus passage, quoted at the beginning of the section, in which Demeter gets identified with bread and Dionysus with wine, springs to mind.

Demeter is metonymically identified with earth and corn and flour in an equally great variety of passages coming from a wide geographical and

[290] Paus. 6.26.1. This comment offers a unique insight into the 'insider's view', i.e. the contemporary participants' perception of divine presence in the festival.

[291] Paus. 3.22.2 with Parker (1988, 100, n. 10).

[292] Paus. 6.26.2. [293] Bonner (1929).

[294] Eschatological dimension of Bacchic mysteries: Versnel (1990, 152); Burkert (1985, 294); Henrichs (1993b, 151); Cole (1993, 281). Cf. also Graf and Johnston (2013, chs 4 and 5) on the eschatology behind the Orphic–Dionysiac tablets.

[295] Compare here the following excerpt from Tryphon's *Peri Tropōn* 195, where these relationships between the deities who manifested themselves so as to make their products of civilization manifest to humanity are expressed in culturally identifiable terms through the schema of inventor and invention: *Μετωνυμία ἐστὶ λέξις ἀπὸ τοῦ ὁμωνύμου τὸ συνώνυμον δηλοῦσα, οἷον σπλάγχνα δ' ἄρ' ἀμπείραντες ὑπείρεχον Ἡφαίστοιο· Ἥφαιστος γὰρ ὁ εὑρὼν τὸ πῦρ· καὶ ὅταν τὸν πυρὸν Δήμητραν εἴπωμεν. ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν εὑρόντων τὰ εὑρήματα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ εὑρήματος τὸν εὑρόντα, οἷον οἶνός μ' ἔπεισε, δαιμόνων ὑπέρτατος.*

chronological range.[296] Already in the *Iliad*,[297] she is *ξανθή Δημήτηρ*, having acquired the colour of the ripened corn, while in the Cypriotic dialect the word for harvesting corn is *δαματρίζειν*.[298] As for Kore, Demeter's youthful simulacrum,[299] there was also a popular metonymy that allowed grain and flour to be addressed as the goddess.[300] The goddess was often depicted as holding ears of corn in her hand and in some vase paintings they seem to spring from her head, enhancing thus even further the metonymic identification between Kore and the grain of wheat.[301] It comes as no surprise, then, that on a cultic level Kore's appearance and disappearance takes the form of the appearance or the disappearance of wheat or of an ear of corn. In Sicily, for instance, Kore's *katagōgē*, the annual arrival of the goddess, was celebrated 'round the time that the fruit of grain was just about to reach completion', that is around May.[302] Information of this kind compels one to interpret the following passage on the epoptic mysteries in Eleusis in a different light: 'the Athenians performing the Eleusinian initiations and displaying to the *epoptae* the great and marvellous and perfect epoptic mystery, in silence, a reaped ear of corn'.[303]

Is it possible that in Eleusis Kore and Demeter appeared in the form of her metonymic counterpart, an ear of corn, just like Dionysus appeared in the form of his sacred liquid, or just like Aphrodite in Sicily appeared and disappeared in the form of her sacred bird? Sourvinou-Inwood—the first to my knowledge to have examined passages like the one quoted above in the interpretative context of advent festivals—certainly thought so.[304] Is it possible that on the higher epoptic level of initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis, Kore's arrival was symbolically represented by an ear of corn, while on the first level of initiation, the *myesis*, the arrival of the Kore was re-enacted, perhaps in a more straightforward way by a member of the priestly personnel (either the goddess's priestess or her *hierophantis*)? Cleanthes says that in the context of mystic initiation, gods are mystic shapes (*μυστικά σχήματα*) and sacred invocations (*κλήσεις ἱεράς*).[305] Could this imply that a special sacred semiology, employing every possible way of representing the divine, was employed in the initiatory chambers of the Greek-speaking world?

[296] See previous note and Schol. *Od.* 1.103: *. . . εἴρηται δὲ περὶ τούτου κρεῖττον ἐν τοῖς εἰς τὴν Ἰλιάδα. ἐν ᾗ καὶ Δήμητρος ἀκτὴ ἐρρέθη που μετωνυμικῶς. ὡς γὰρ μετωνυμία ἦν, εἰπεῖν ἀντὶ πυρὸς Ἥφαιστον τὸν ἐπιστατοῦντα τῷ πυρί, οὕτω μετωνυμικόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ ἀντὶ ἀλφίτου ἀκτῆς, εἰπεῖν ἀκτὴν Δήμητρος ἢ τῶν ἀλφίτων αἰτία ἐστί. κατὰ τοιοῦτον τρόπον, καὶ τὸν ἄρτον Ὀππιανὸς Δήμητραν λέγει ἐν τῷ, τυρὸν ὁμοῦ Δήμητρι μεμιγμένον. κτλ.* Cf. also Eur. *Phoen.* 689–90: *Δαμάτηρ θεά, | πάντων ἄνασσα, πάντων δὲ Γᾶ τροφός*; Diod. Sic. 1.12.4; Sext. Emp. *Adv. Math.* 9. 189; Cic. *DND* 2.67.

[297] *Il.* 5.500 with Schol. ad loc.: *ξανθὴ Δημήτηρ*] *ὁ πυρός. ὁ δὲ τρόπος μετωνυμία* with Burkert (*GR*, 159, n.7).

[298] Hesych. s.v. *δαματρίζειν*.

[299] At least in several iconographical representations. On the problem of identification of the divine personae and spheres of influence of the two goddesses see Burkert (1983, 289) and Kerényi (1962, 46–7). Compare also *Inscriptions de Délos* 2475 (Roussel ed.): *Δ]ήμητρος Ἐλευσινίας καὶ κόρης καὶ γυναικός*.

[300] Euboulos fr. 75.10 (*CAF* II 191); Antiphanes fr. 52.9 (*CAF* II 31) with Burkert (1983, 260).

[301] E.g. Metzger (1951, pls 33.1 and 34.3).

[302] Diod. Sic. 5.4.4–5; 4.23.4–5. For a more detailed discussion of this and other Kore-related festivals see chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[303] Hipp. *Refut. Her.* 5.8.39.

[304] Sourvinou-Inwood (2003a, 39).

[305] Cleanthes *SVF* 1. 538.

This is, I think, certainly a question worth asking, but extremely difficult, if not impossible, to answer with any degree of certainty.

ZOOMORPHIC EPIPHANY: ANIMAL-LIKE GODS

Zoomorphic or theriomorphic epiphanies, as they are also known, have been attested in Greece since the Bronze Age. This section examines the following three subcategories of zoomorphic manifestations: a) avian, b) bovine, c) reptilian. These forms have been privileged over others because of the frequency with which they are attested in narratives of a wide geographical and chronological range. Divine manifestations in animal form are perhaps the most difficult morphological division, mainly because the notion of zoomorphic divine manifestations has been used and, often, abused by scholars who were at pains to prove that some continuity in religious beliefs and practice existed between the so-called Minoan civilization and the Greek mainland. Secondly, disentangling zoomorphism from the notion of totemism, so popular with the Cambridge Ritualists, has not ceased from being another challenge for the student of Greek religious ideas and practice.[306] Notwithstanding the difficulties, the ambiguities, and the philological misunderstandings, I will try to keep things simple. Only the most unambiguous cases of gods that manifested themselves in animal form, or were expected to do so, are examined here. From the ensuing discussion it will soon become clear that a certain degree of overlapping between the categories of zoomorphic and *pars pro toto* epiphanies inevitably results. This overlap is even more apparent in those cases where the deity chooses or is expected to manifest itself in the form of his or her sacred animal. One should not necessarily regard this overlapping as negative; and it does not reflect on the soundness of methodology used or of the quality of the definition employed. It is simply the by-product of the enormous challenge undertaken: applying modern methodological divisions to ancient religious practices and beliefs.

Avian epiphanies?

γλαὺξ εἰς Ἀθήνας
Athenian proverb

Avian epiphanies (especially in a baetylic or arboreal cultic context)[307] are depicted on Minoan and Mycenean seal rings.[308] Polinger-Foster has argued for a new, epiphanic reading of a vegetation scene, also known as 'the flight of the

[306] Cf. here Harrison's analysis of Dionysus' bovine epiphany in the *Bacchae* in her *Themis* (1963, 129ff.)

[307] That is epiphanies brought about through shaking or pulling a tree, and/or touching a *baetyl*. On those see Matz (1958) and Niemeier (1990), among several others.

[308] E.g. the gold rings of Midea (*CMS* I, 191), from Kalyvia (*CMS* II, 114), and the one from Sellopolou (Pollinger-Foster 1995, fig. 11). *Βασιλάκου* (1997) offers a good introductory discussion on these rings.

swallows'.[309] In her view, the whole Delta 2 room at Akrotiri of Thera offered a dramatic cultic setting that facilitated bird epiphanies. Our Homeric texts bear traces of avian epiphanies, which can be found in traditional cult epithets like that of γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη ('owl-eyed Athene'). Nonetheless, there are only a handful of instances where it can be said—and even then not with a great degree of certainty—that gods actually transformed themselves into birds.[310]

In the first book of the *Odyssey*, in particular, Athena arrives at Ithaca and interacts with Telemachus as Mentes, but leaves the scene of action 'like a sea hawk' (ὄρνις δ' ὣς ἀνόπαια διέπτατο).[311] Similarly, in the third book, Athena arrives at Pylos and interacts with Nestor as Mentor, but leaves most spectacularly, 'like a sea eagle' (φήνῃ εἰδομένη).[312] In both cases, the goddess's departure causes the human perceivers to experience *thambos*, a typical reaction to divine manifestations.[313] In Telemachus' case, the reaction is described as an internalized intellectual process, through which he infers that he has just been confronted by a divine being; while in Nestor's case, *thambos* is experienced en masse: all the Achaeans recognized that the creature who had just departed in the likeness of a seagull was, in fact, Telemachus' divine escort (*theos pompos*). But while at Pylos we are explicitly told that the goddess adopted the form of a sea eagle, Athena departs from Ithaca, 'flying upwards as a bird' (ὄρνις δ' ὣς ἀνόπαια διέπτατο). Is that a simile and not quite an epiphany? If the answer to the above question is yes, then, why does the goddess's departure cause *thambos*, a typical concomitant *sēmeion* of an epiphany?

Poseidon's departure, on the other hand, 'as a hawk, swift of flight' (αὐτὸς δ' ὥς τ' ἴρηξ ὠκύπτερος ὦρτο πέτεσθαι), is almost certainly a simile.[314] The same holds true in the cases of Athena, darting off from Olympus 'like a falcon, wide of wing and shrill in voice' (ἡ δ' ἅρπῃ ἐϊκυῖα τανυπτέρυγι λιγυφώνῳ), and of Hermes speeding over the waves 'like a bird, the cormorant' (λάρῳ ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς).[315]

However, for the majority of passages where birds and gods appear to be inextricably intertwined, the demarcation line between simile and metamorphosis is not easily drawn.[316] Distinguishing between simile and actual zoomorphic metamorphosis becomes even harder when it comes to gods who are not compared to birds while in motion, but while seated or standing somewhere silently observing the course of the action. It is not so difficult, for instance, to imagine how a deity may disappear or appear as swiftly as a bird, but what exactly are we to imagine when we are told that Athena and Apollo are seated on a branch 'like

[309] Polinger-Foster (1995, 409–26).

[310] Dietrich (1983, 57). I am much indebted to Nicholas Richardson, who very kindly let me read one of his unpublished papers on Homeric epiphanies entitled: 'Gods and Men: Epiphany'.

[311] *Od.* 1.319–23.

[312] *Od.* 3.371–2. For information on the names of the birds in Homer and related problems see Thompson (1936) and Pollard (1977, 30–3, 178–9, 146–54).

[313] Perkins (1986, 7) claims that in the *Iliad thambos* is always a reaction to an external trigger. Contra Aubriot (1989, 249ff.) with more bibliographical references. On *thambos* as a hallmark of epiphanies see Strauss-Clay (1983, 167ff.) and Buxton (2010, 164–8).

[314] *Il.* 13.62.

[315] Athena: *Il.* 19.349–50; Hermes: *Od.* 5.51.

[316] Buxton (2010, 158–64) on the logic behind divine transformation.

vultures' (*ὄρνισιν ἐοικότες αἰγυπιοῖσι*)?[317] Athena and Apollo meet each other on a branch and exchange notes on the battle and its protagonists. Their briefing takes place on an oak tree, where they are sitting. The focus goes back to the human protagonists and when the poet gives a panoramic view of the scene, the gods are still seated on the branches of Zeus' sacred tree, only this time they are likened to vultures. Is this a simile or a typical scene of divine metamorphosis? As if this degree of complexity was not enough, we are explicitly told that Helenus, the seer, could overhear the gods' conversation, which might be taken as an indication that the two vultures seated on the tree are omens (*οἰωνοί*), or in other words, bird signs that call for deciphering.

An analogous degree of ambiguity surrounds Athena's interacting with Odysseus and the suitors in an anthropomorphic likeness, i.e. as Mentor, and later on assuming the likeness of a gull that takes its place on the roof-beam (*αὐτὴ δ' αἰθαλόεντος ἀνὰ μεγάροιο μέλαθρον | ἕζετ' ἀναΐξασα, χελιδόνι εἰκέλη ἄντην*);[318] Leukothea helps Odysseus, and then dives into the sea 'in the likeness of a swallow' (*αἰθυίῃ δ' εἰκυῖα ποτῆ*);[319] Hera and Athena walk like two 'timorous doves', but talk to the Argives in anthropomorphic likeness.[320] These passages have been variously interpreted by different scholars. Among them, Nilsson was perhaps the most willing to recognize a god transformed into a bird almost in all of the aforementioned cases.[321] Following in his steps, Dietrich argued that several instances of what Nilsson recognized as 'bird epiphanies' (e.g. *Od.* 1.320; 3.372; 5.353; *Il.* 5.778, etc.) could be better understood as simply expressing this 'mysterious bond between the animal world and the gods'.[322] Dirlmeier, on the other hand, invokes common-sense empiricism in his interpretative attempts: 'Common sense', he argues, dictates that all the passages quoted above act, essentially, as similes; they are not zoomorphic epiphanies.[323]

One of Dirlmeier's central arguments is the lack of evidence for bird epiphanies in post-Homeric art and literature, which is not entirely accurate. We have already seen, for instance, how closely Zeus is associated with the eagle, Aphrodite with her doves, and Athena with the owl.[324] Yet, the counterargument here is that these were sacred animals *associated* but *not identified with* the deities. From Pausanias, though, we learn that in Megara they honoured a bird deity, Athena *Αἴθυια* (Athena the gull, or the storm bird).[325] In Hesychius, we find the mythological background of bird-Athena, who transformed herself into a gull or storm bird and thus managed to hide Cecrops, the Athenian mythical king, and transport him

[317] *Il.* 7.17–22 and 58–60. Cf. *Il.* 14.286–91, where Hypnos, in an attempt to hide from Zeus, sits on a fir tree in the likeness (*ἐναλίγκιος*) of a sea hawk. This instance is not so important, because there is no human perceiver.

[318] *Od.* 22.239–40. [319] *Od.* 5.351–3. [320] *Il.* 5.778–9.

[321] E.g. Nilsson (1949, 25–35) and (1950, 340ff.).

[322] A thesis he repeated in many other of his papers, e.g. Dietrich (1983) and (1994). Both Nilsson and Dietrich dealt with these passages as religious residues from the so-called 'Minoan religion'.

[323] Dirlmeier (1967).

[324] In the '*Pars pro toto* epiphany' section. Cf. also Ael. *NA* 12.4 Hercher: *ὁ μὲν περδικοθήρας καὶ ὠκύπτερος Ἀπόλλωνός ἐστι θεράπων φασί, φήνην δὲ καὶ ἅρπην Ἀθηνᾷ προσνέμουσιν, Ἑρμοῦ δὲ τὸν φασσοφόντην ἄθυρμα εἶναί φασιν, Ἥρας δὲ τὸν τανυσίπτερον, καὶ τὸν τριόρχην οὕτω καλούμενον Ἀρτέμιδος. μητρὶ δὲ θεῶν τὸν μέρμνον **, καὶ ἄλλον ἄλλῳ θεῷ.*

[325] Paus. 1.5.4 and 46.6.

to Megara.[326] We also hear about an Athena *Βούδειαν*, whom Lycophron calls 'the gull- or the storm-bird-maiden'. This bird-like deity was worshipped in Magnesia and in Thessaly.[327] On a Corinthian *aryballos* from Aegina, where Athena is depicted on her chariot helping Herakles to fight the Lernean Hydra, a human-headed bird, identified as *Foús* from the inscription, accompanies the goddess.[328] In the *Etymologicum magnum* this bird is connected to *αἴθυια* or 'storm bird'.[329] Is Athena, along with her hybridic manifestation (the human-headed bird), presented as assisting the hero in a moment of crisis? No definite answer can be given.

Probably the most well-known association between Athena and a bird is that of Athena and the owl.[330] On the famous Uppsala hydria a huge owl hovers above a sacrificial altar, while a young man stands nearby in adoration. 'Evidently it [sc. the bird] represents Athena but whether it is a subjective vision of the votary, or a sign of the deity's presence is hard to decide.'[331] Yet the question is perhaps beside the point. This is a striking illustration of a post-Homeric avian epiphany of Athena that takes place during a sacrifice, a characteristic locus for epiphanies.[332]

In the same vein and according to a tradition preserved by Aristophanes and others, Athena's sacred bird was seen before the battle of Marathon:

> There were so many arrows up there that we could not see the sky;
> but still, with the gods' help, towards the evening we pushed them back;
> for an owl had flown across our ranks before the battle
> (*γλαῦξ γὰρ ἡμῶν πρὶν μάχεσθαι τὸν στρατὸν διέπτατο*).[333]

In other sources, the same incident is reported as having taken place before the battle of Salamis.[334] The flight of the owl was traditionally interpreted to be a victorious portent, but I think the *γάρ* structure qualifies the *ξυν θεοίς* of the previous line.[335] The appearance of the owl, Athena's sacred bird, signifies that the army fights under the tutelage of the goddess.[336] Aristophanes' narrative, like the Homeric ones, verges on the borderline between a *pars pro toto* and a

[326] Hesych. s.v. *<ἐν δ' Αἴθυια>· οὕτως Ἀθηνᾶ τιμᾶται παρὰ Μεγαρεῦσιν· ἐπειδὴ εἰς αἴθυιαν ἀπεικασθεῖσα ὑπὸ τὰ πτερὰ ἔκρυψε τὸν Κέκροπα, καὶ διεκόμισεν εἰς τὰ Μέγαρα.*

[327] Steph. Byz. *Eth.* 180.6.

[328] *JHS* 114: pl. 40 = Cook (1914, 796, fig. 597). More on this *aryballos* and Athena's cultic and iconographical associations with birds and snakes in Gimbutas (1982, 148–200). The fully armed owl in the well-known skyphos from the Louvre (CA2192) is perhaps a comic invention. See Balty (1982); and Carpenter, T. H., with Mannack, T., and Mendonca, M. (1989[2]) *Beazley Addenda*, Oxford, 311, Beazley archive number 213371.

[329] *E.M.* 699.10 s.v. *<Πώϋγγες>*: *Αἱ αἴθυιαι, αἱ κληθεῖσαι βοῦγγες*. cf. A. Kiock, *ARW* 18, 1915, 128 cf. also Pseudo-Zonaras, *<Πώϋγγες>. αἱ αἴθυιαι αἱ κληθεῖσαι βοῦγγες. παρὰ τὴν βοὴν καὶ τὴν ἰϋγήν.*

[330] On Athena and her owl, see Bron (1992) and Shapiro (1994).

[331] Marinatos (1986, 10, fig. 3). See also Boardman (1974, fig. 55) for another bird hovering above a sacrificial altar.

[332] More on this issue in chapter 6, 'Sacrifice'.

[333] Ar. *Vesp.* 1084–6. Cf. also Ammon *FGrHist* 361 F5.

[334] *Hesych.* s.v. *γλαῦξ ἔπτατο.*

[335] *Anth. Pal.* 7.425.8: *γλαῦξ ἄδε γλαυκᾶς Παλλάδος ἀμφίπολον*; Suda s.v. *<Γλαὺξ ἵπταται:> ἡ πτῆσις τῆς γλαυκὸς εἰς νίκης σύμβολον ἐλογίζετο.*

[336] Schol. *ad Il.* 1.139 (and the proverb *γλαὺξ εἰς Ἀθήνας*); Schol. *ad* Ar. *Av.* 1106 (an owl was depicted on one side of the Attic tetradrachmon, while Athena's face was depicted on the other); Schol. *ad* Ar. *Vesp.* 1086a.3.

zoomorphic manifestation. One cannot safely decide which is which, and perhaps it does not even matter: they are both equally well-attested morphological variants of divine epiphany. Whether as omens, epiphanies, or even similes, birds are standard signifiers of the sacred from the Bronze Age onwards.[337]

Reptilian epiphanies

Aelian, in his attempt to illustrate the frequently quoted Homeric line on the challenges and the dangers entailed in direct encounters with the divine in full majesty (*Il.* 20.131), reports an entertaining episode that involves spying on an Egyptian deity in the form of a snake.[338] This particular reptilian deity was worshipped at Metelis, as we are told, and enjoyed all the privileges befitting a divine being: a private sacred dwelling, servants, priests, and above all a daily feast of barley and honey-sweet wine.[339] Each day the servants prepared the sacred table (of the kind that we have seen present in the temples of Greek anthropomorphic deities), filled up the krater and closed the doors behind them, assuming that their snake god would prefer to dine in private.[340] Apparently, though, not everybody was convinced that these food offerings were, indeed, consumed by the snake god rather than by a member of his priesthood: one day the older of the gods' servants, consumed by his desire to spy on the god, opened the doors secretly and witnessed the god's feasting on the offerings.[341] Having become aware of the violation of his privacy, the snake god punished the meddling priest by depriving him first of his senses, then of his ability to speak, and finally of his life.

This indicates that viewing zoomorphic gods, without taking the necessary precautions, entails the same dangers as viewing anthropomorphic gods and gods in the shape of their cult statues. This tendency by itself aligns zoomorphic manifestations with other morphological variants of epiphany. One may rightly object that the narrative from Aelian exemplifies zoomorphism in Egypt, a well-attested phenomenon in both literature and art, but cannot be used as evidence for zoomorphic manifestations in Greek cultic practice and ideas.[342] But the ritual daily feeding of the Egyptian reptile is not so different from the monthly ritual feeding of the Athenian snake Erichthonius, Athena's *pars pro toto* facsimile (or is it her zoomorphic manifestation?).[343] Athena was also said to have sent madness, just like the Egyptian snake god, upon the daughters of Cecrops for not restraining their desire to find out the content of the taboo chest with which she had entrusted them. When the girls opened the chest, they found in it Erichthonius, the goddess's offspring, surrounded by a snake.[344] What's more, there are plenty of examples of Greek deities that were said to have manifested themselves in

[337] Bushnell (1982) passim.
[338] Ael. *NA* 11.17.1.
[339] The reader is reminded here of the food offerings Athena's sacred snake also enjoyed.
[340] See chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals' and 'Sacrifice'.
[341] As was often the case with offerings left on *trapezai* in front of the statues of the gods in the Greek temples.
[342] For a comparison between Egypt and Greece concerning zoomorphism in cultic reality see Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 379d.
[343] The latest discussion on the topic is that of Ogden (2013, 195–7).
[344] Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.6; Eur. *Ion* 273–4 with Blum (1970, 299).

reptilian shape, such as Zeus (in his cultic manifestations as Ammon and Meilichios), Asclepius, the Dioscuri, Trophonios, Amphiaraos, Kychreus, and many others.[345] Needless to say some of them were also iconographically depicted as snakes. Zeus Meilichios, for instance, was portrayed either as a fatherly figure (very close to that of Asclepius and Sarapis) or as a snake.[346]

Pötscher was the first to argue systematically that both the snake and the bird can be perceived as a 'theriomorphische Erscheinung der Götter' in post-Homeric art and cult practice.[347] Of course, the problem with the post-Homeric sources arises from the difficulty of determining whether what is described is indeed a manifestation of the deity itself in the form of a snake or a bird or the manifestation of the deity's sacred snake or bird, i.e. the manifestation of a symbol, of a part of the divine essence. Nowhere is this problem more palpable than in the cult of Asclepius. The god first arrived at the city of Athens (more precisely at the harbour of Zeus in Piraeus) in the form of a snake riding on Telemachus' chariot.[348] Almost a decade later, the god arrived in Sicyon again in the form of his sacred snake on a cart drawn by mules.[349] Examples like these could be multiplied without difficulty: Asclepius arrived in the shape of a snake, apart from in Athens and Sicyon, in the city of Limera, the city of Halieis, and in Rome as late as the third century AD.[350] In Asclepius' case, his sacred snakes (almost invariably of Epidaurian origin) functioned as zoomorphic cult dispatchers in the rest of the Greek-speaking cities and beyond.[351]

Garland rightly reminds us here that the acquisition of a symbol of the deity's physical presence—whether in the form of a human playing the part of the god, an animal which was his familiar, a cult statue, or even an aniconic form (as in the case of the Mother of the gods, whose presence was symbolized by a large stone)—may be necessary but cannot by itself be a sufficient condition for a successful cult transfer. It is the ritual attending the entry of the deity that cements the link between the newly introduced god and his community and guarantees that this

[345] Zeus: Isocr. *Hel.* 59–60 M-B; Schol. *ad Il.* 12.292 = Bacchyl. fr. 12 Irigoin; Hes. *Scut.* 26–56 Solmsen; fr. 195 M-W; Diod. Sic. 4.9.2; [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 2.5.3–8 Wagner; Eur. *Hel.* 18–21, *Bacch.* 26–36; *PV* 640–57; Diod. Sic. 1.23.4–5; *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 202–51 Richardson. On Zeus and his erotic zoomorphic manifestations, see also chapter 5, 'Erotic epiphanies'. Asclepius: e.g. Paus. 2.10.3. More on Asclepius' myths of introduction and his sacred snakes in chapter 3. Trophonius: Suda s.v. *Τροφωνίου κατὰ γῆς παίγνια*; Amphiaraus: F28 K-A and *LIMC Amphiaraos* no. 63 with Garland (1992, 121) and Ogden (2001, 85).

[346] Burkert *GR* 201ff: 'The fatherly figure signifies reconciliation with the dead, just as his name epitomizes the appeasing effect of the offerings to the dead.' More on Zeus M(e)ilichios in Cook (1925, vol. 2, 1091–160) and F. Graf (1974, 139–44). On the cult and the theriomorphic representation of Zeus Meilichios, see Laconde (2006) and, more recently, Ogden (2013, 272–82).

[347] Pötscher (1990, 106).

[348] More on the Telemachus monument (a T-shaped structure made of Pentelic marble) in chapter 3, 'Asclepius the divine healer, Asclepius the divine physician'.

[349] Paus. 2.10.3: *φασὶ δέ σφισιν ἐξ Ἐπιδαύρου κομισθῆναι τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ ζεύγους ἡμιόνων δράκοντι εἰκασμένον, τὴν δὲ ἀγαγοῦσαν Νικαγόραν εἶναι Σικυωνίαν Ἀγασικλέους μητέρα, γυναῖκα δὲ Ἐχετίμου. ἐνταῦθα ἀγάλματά ἐστιν οὐ μεγάλα ἀπηρτημένα τοῦ ὀρόφου.*

[350] Limera: Paus. 3.23; Halieis: *IG* IV2, 1, 121–2, B33 = Herzog (1931, no. XXXIII); Rome: Livy, *Epit.* 11.

[351] More on the topic in chapter 3, 'Asclepius' zoomorphic epiphanies'; and in Petridou (2014).

link cannot be broken.[352] Alternatively, the god, if not transported from a renowned cult centre, may manifest his presence by being born in a specific place. A god's birth epiphany (*γέννησις*) was valued even more highly than his simple visitation (*παρουσία*).[353]

A version of this ritual (albeit riddled with humorous overtones) can be found in a passage from Lucian, where Alexander, the pseudo-seer, stages a birth epiphany of Asclepius, to ratify the introduction of his pseudo-mystery/oracular/healing cult.[354] The god manifested his godhead as an infant reptile hidden within an empty goose egg, which Alexander had previously buried under the foundations of a newly planned temple. But first his arrival was publicly advertised by the pseudo-prophet himself, who had run through the agora naked and ecstatic heralding the god's imminent epiphany and singing hymns to appease the coming god and to secure his benevolence. The audience's response to all this was typical of those perceiving a divine manifestation: initially they were struck with awe, amazement, and even confusion, but when they finally beheld the infant reptile emerging from the cracked egg, they were overjoyed and broke into loud cheering and they all prostrated themselves in front of the snake-like god. The citizens of Abonouteichos, then, had no reservations in regarding the baby snake as the theriomorphic reincarnation of Asclepius. The close connections of this fraudulent healing cult with the well-attested cult of Neos Asklepios Glykon have been pertinently explored by Petsalis-Diomidis in her latest book on Aelius Aristides and the cult of Asclepius.[355] The healing mystery cult of Neos Asklepios Glykon (lit. 'the Sweet one') proved to be extremely popular and its wide geographical distribution is attested by statuettes depicting the god himself (Fig. 1.3), which were found everywhere from the Athenian agora to excavation sites in Pisidia and Mysia.

We cannot be sure whether the Athenians, the Sicyonians, the people of Limera, or the people of Halieis, regarded the Epidaurian snake dispatches as symbols of the god's presence (hence as *pars pro toto* epiphanies), as fragments of Asclepius' divine essence, or as his actual zoomorphic manifestation. There are arguments to support either case: Pausanias' wording (in 2.10.3), for instance, points to a zoomorphic epiphany (*δράκοντι εἰκασμένον*). In later sources, as in a most interesting passage from Marinus' *Life of Proclus*,[356] the manifestation of the sacred snake is explicitly characterized as an *epiphaneia*. But there are a large number of these sacred snakes along with other sacred animals (e.g. dogs and horses) that populate the temples of Asclepius.[357] Are they all to be conceived as zoomorphic manifestations of the god? In all probability, such a dilemma would not have been of any relevance to those who populated Asclepius' temples. Whether we regard them as *pars pro toto* or actual zoomorphic manifestations, these snakes were for the god's contemporary devotees signifiers of the divine presence. Besides, from

[352] Garland (1992, 122). [353] Cf. Diod. Sic. 3.66.2. [354] Luc. *Alex.* 13–14.

[355] Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 12–66). On Glykon's reptilian shape, see Ogden (2013, 325–9).

[356] *Vita Procli* 30 (App. 194). The epiphany of the god is taken as a token of intimacy between Proclus and Asclepius.

[357] All the references are from Herzog (1931): dogs: nos 20 and 26; horses of Asclepius' chariot in no. 38; snake: no. 33; snake and god: nos 37, 42. On further evidence for the maintence of sacred snakes in the temples of Asclepius and other healing sanctuaries, see Ogden (2013, 350–69, and 310–46).

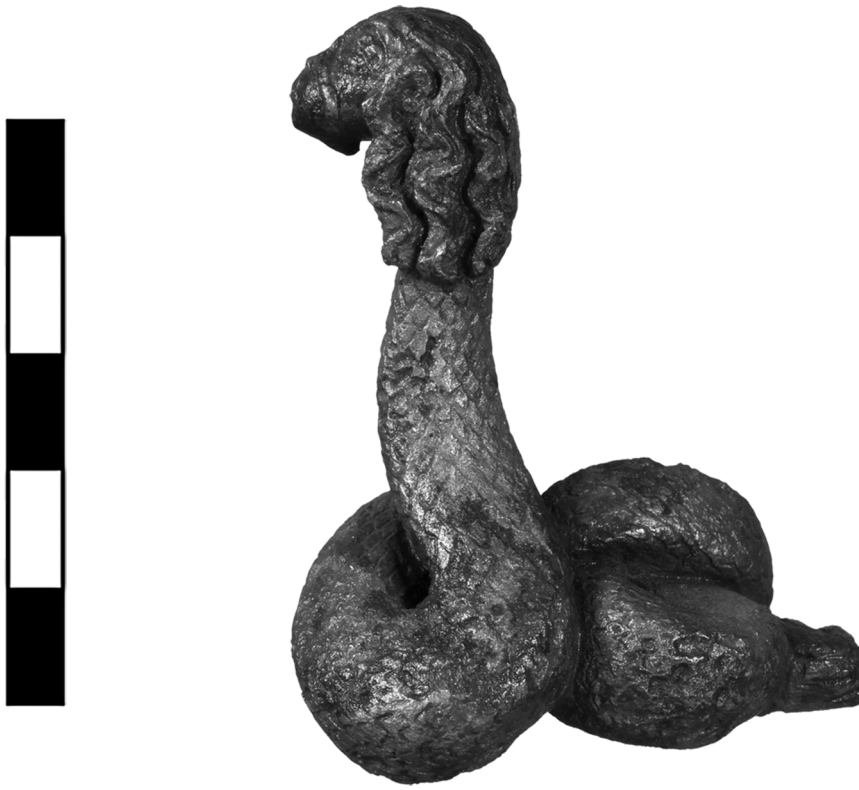


Fig. 1.3. Bronze statuette of Neos Asklepios Glykon from the Athenian Agora, now in the Attalos-Stoa Museum (B 253), Ancient Agora Museum, Athens.

what we can gather from both our literary and iconographical evidence the images of the physician and of the god's sacred snake are more than complementary: they are in fact two sides of the same coin. Instantly we are reminded here of the text from the seventeenth cure from the Epidaurian Asclepeion: the patient himself perceived the god as a man treating his ulcerous toe, while the bystanders saw a snake coming out of the *abaton* and licking the man's toe. This intimate relationship between the anthropomorphic and the zoomorphic healing deity, or perhaps between the divine physician and his reptile familiar, is also evident in a celebrated votive relief from Oropos, which on the far right depicts the hero Amphiaraos tending Archinos' (the dedicant's) shoulder, while on the left a snake licks the affected part as the same dedicant sleeps.[358]

When Alexander presents the citizens of Abonouteichos with the infant snake, the reincarnation of Asclepius, he invites them to behold Zeus' twice-born son with a goose; thus implying that the god mated with the bird in the guise of a

[358] Van Straten (1976, fig. 10). On this and other related reliefs which explore iconographically the patient–physician relationship, see Baker (2015) and Petridou (2016).

snake, one of his favourite erotic animal guises.[359] Zeus was said to have sired many heroes in the shape of a snake, such as Aratus from Sicyon,[360] while it was thought that Ammon Zeus fathered Alexander the Great in the shape of a snake.[361] Plutarch's description of Philip spying on the god's lovemaking with his wife Olympias corresponds to Aelian's narrative: just like the meddling servant who becomes progressively dumb, maddened, and finally dies, the king of Macedonia is punished for his impiety by losing one of his eyes.[362]

A more tenuous link between a snake deity and the birth of a hero can also be drawn between Aristomenes from Messene and the Dioscuri. The Messenian hero had been sired by a snake, at least according to some sources, and the Dioscuri, patron deities of both Sparta and Messene, were often depicted as snakes.[363] It is therefore possible that 'Aristomenes was actually sired, directly or indirectly, by the very Dioscuri he was destined to spend his life struggling against'.[364]

With Aristomenes and the snake-shaped Dioscuri we have moved into another context, along with sexual intercourse, temple medicine, divination, and cult, in which reptilian zoomorphic manifestations were also very common: warfare.[365] Pausanias informs us about two such zoomorphic manifestations, the first in the course of the sea battle of Salamis and the second during a military conflict between the Arcadians and the Eleans.[366] The hero Kychreus, in particular, manifested himself in the form of a snake in the Athenian ships and inspired the army with confidence.[367] Pausanias' wording (*ναυμαχούντων δὲ Ἀθηναίων πρὸς Μήδους δράκοντα ἐν ταῖς ναυσὶ λέγεται φανῆναι*) does not leave any room for doubt; Kychreus' zoomorphic manifestation is described as any other epiphanic manifestation in the course of the battle: a military crisis is resolved or temporarily relieved by a divine epiphany.

Sosipolis' epiphany (his name meaning 'the Saviour of the Polis') takes place once again in a military crisis: a woman suckling a baby boy appeared to the Elean generals while they are arrayed for battle against the enemy, and told them that she had been instructed by dream visions to give the baby to the Eleans as their ally in response to which they placed the baby naked right in front of their military ranks.[368] At the very moment of the attack, though, the baby turned out to be a serpent. Sosipolis' reptilian manifestation caused terror (*ταραχθεῖσι δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ θεάματι*) and disorder in the lines of the enemy, who fled, and granted the Eleans

[359] Luc. *Alex.* 13–14. On erotic desire as standard motive for divine metamorphosis see Buxton (2009, 126–32).

[360] Paus. 2.10.3; 4.14.7–8.

[361] Cf. Justin 11.11.3; Paus. 4.14.7–8; Arrian *Anab.* 3.3.2.

[362] Plut. *Alex.* 3.1–4.

[363] For snakes (pair or single) associated with Sparta and Messene: Pind. *Nem.* 10.52; Paus. 3.26.3 with Ogden (2004, 64–5). Dioscuri as snakes: *LIMC* Dioscuri no. 257.

[364] Ogden (2004, 64). see also chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems'.

[365] Ample iconographic and literary evidence on snakes in the battlefield can be found in Mitropoulou (1977); see pp. 55–64 esp. on Dioscuri depicted as snakes (combining protective and apotropaic qualities) on the gravestones of Spartan soldiers. On battle epiphanies as a whole see the relevant discussion in chapter 2.

[366] Salamis: Paus. 1.36.1–2; Elis: 6.20.2–5.

[367] Paus. 1.36.1–2. Note here that the identification between the zoomorphic deity and the name Kychreus is a *post eventum* one; it only takes place after having consulted the Delphic oracle. In Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.127 Kychreus is a serpent-killer; in Strabo 9.1.9 he is a serpent-breeder.

[368] Paus. 6.20.2–5.

a most *manifest* victory (*νίκην ἐπιφανεστάτην*). A sanctuary was built to honour jointly Sosipolis and his mother Eileithyia, since the boy's mother was identified with the *kourotrophos* deity; and a priestess was chosen annually to play the role of the snake god's surrogate mother. The priestess, who was the only human allowed to confront the deity, used to perform her daily nursing tasks (feeding and bathing the serpent) with her face and body wrapped up in a white prophylactic veil (in a constant gesture of *aposkopein*?). Thus, and unlike the meddling priest and the king of Macedonia, the priestess of the theriomorphic Sosipolis succeeded in shielding herself against a direct physical encounter with the divinity and the ensuing calamitous consequences.

Bovine epiphanies

Divine birth is often perceived and celebrated as the first epiphany of a deity.[369] This is a cross-culturally attested phenomenon, as indicated by a narrative in Herodotus on the Egyptian birth epiphany of the god Apis: the god was said to appear at irregular intervals in the likeness of a calf.[370] There were certain signs that pointed towards the calf's divinity: a white diamond on his forehead, an image of an eagle on his back, some double hairs on his tail, and a scarab under his tongue. Whenever this bovine god appeared the Egyptians would dress the calf in precious garments and mark their god's advent with several festivities, which included—just like the advent festivals celebrated in the Greek-speaking world—communal dining. Herodotus compares Apis, the calf god, to the Greek god Epaphus, the offspring of cow-shaped Io and Zeus, the philanderer god.[371]

Greek river gods were also often portrayed in the form of bulls. Scamander bellows like a bull in the *Iliad*, Kephisos is said to be bull-shaped in *Ion*, and Acheloos appears looking like a bull when wooing Deianeira.[372] Aelian provides us with an exhaustive list of these bull-shaped rivers all around Greece.[373] Aelian says that rivers were depicted in plastic art and in cult either as men, or as bulls, or, finally, as men with bull horns on their head. Acheloos in the *Trachiniae* takes all these three shapes when he asks Deianeira to take him as her lover.[374] Strabo offers us a rationalistic explanation of why river gods were portrayed as bulls (because of their sound) or serpents (because of their length).[375]

[369] More on this in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[370] Hdt. 3.27–9: *Ἀπιγμένου δὲ Καμβύσεω ἐς Μέμφιν ἐφάνη Αἰγυπτίοισι ὁ Ἆπις, τὸν Ἕλληνες Ἔπαφον καλέουσι· ἐπιφανέος δὲ τούτου γενομένου αὐτίκα οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι εἵματά τε ἐφόρεον τὰ κάλλιστα καὶ ἦσαν ἐν θαλίῃσι . . . Οἱ δὲ ἔφραζον ὥς σφι θεὸς εἴη φανεὶς διὰ χρόνου πολλοῦ ἐωθὼς ἐπιφαίνεσθαι καὶ ὡς, ἐπεὰν φανῇ, τότε πάντες Αἰγύπτιοι κεχαρηκότες ὁρτάζοιεν. Ταῦτα ἀκούσας ὁ Καμβύσης ἔφη ψεύδεσθαί σφεας καὶ ὡς ψευδομένους θανάτῳ ἐζημίου*. Cf. also *idem* 2.153.

[371] Aesch. *Suppl.* 289–313; Schol. *ad* Eur. *Phoen.* 678; Schol. *ad* Pind. *Nem.* 10.8; Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.10.1. More on Zeus and Io's amorous liaison in chapter 5, 'Night and dreaming'.

[372] Aston (2011, 78–89) expertly discusses horned river gods like Kephisos and Acheloos. See esp. figs 13–18.

[373] Aelian, *VH* 2.33.

[374] Scamander: *Il.* 21.237 and Schol. ad loc.; Kephisos: Eur. *Ion* 1261; Achelōos: Soph. *Trach.* 9–13 with Schol. More bull-shaped river gods in Hor. *Carm.* IV 14; Nonnus *Dion.* 19.345; 41.300; 48.938–9; Mart. 10.7.6. Cf. also Nilsson (1950, 238); *RE* 6.2780–2.

[375] Strab. 10.2.19.

But perhaps the most well-known paradigm of bovine divine manifestation, both in myth and cult, is that of bull-shaped Dionysus. In the scene that follows the so-called Palace miracles in the *Bacchae*, the Stranger comes back on stage to calm the terror- and awe-stricken chorus and to tell of all that happened in the prison-like stables of the Theban king. Pentheus was confronted with various epiphanies of the protean god: first he sees a *bull* (618), which he mistakes for his prisoner god and tries, most unsuccessfully, to put back in chains. Later on, as soon as he rushes out to the court, he is confronted with a *phasma* (630),[376] another of Bromios' prolific illusionary creations. Throughout Pentheus' psychosomatic ordeal, the god's missionary, or rather *the actor assimilated to the god*, has been standing nearby observing the Theban prince's physical and mental effort to 'grasp' (both literally and metaphorically) the divine essence of the being he is confronted with. Richard Hamilton thought of this as a double divine revelation: Dionysus appears first as a bull and then as phantom.[377] In fact, what we have here is an exceptional case of harmonious co-existence of three morphological variants of divine epiphany: i) the animal god (zoomorphic epiphany), ii) the *phasma* of the god (*phasma* epiphany), and iii) the god in the shape of a man (anthropomorphic epiphany).

Within the appropriate cultic context, such as that of a cletic hymn in the course of an advent festival or an initiation ritual, Dionysus was often expected and invoked to manifest himself in the shape of a bull. At the beginning of the fourth episode of the *Bacchae*—a play that provides insightful comments on the interdependence of the cultic and the theatrical scene—it is Pentheus, who has now changed from being the autocratic, self-righteous prince into the god's bewildered follower, who sees Dionysus in the shape of a bull: 'I think you walk before me as a bull; I think your head is horned now.[378] Were you perhaps an animal all the time? For certainly now you are changed into a bull.'[379] The answer that comes from the disguised god is far from clear and reassuring: 'The god attends us; though previously, he was not well predisposed, he is now at peace with us. Now you see what is befitting for you to see.' It is, nevertheless, true. It is only now, while he experiences this double vision (he sees two suns and two Thebes), that he can truly appreciate the double nature and the double epiphany of the god, who walks in front of him in his zoomorphic likeness and by his side still in his anthropomorphic one.

While a bovine shape was not Dionysus' only animal form, it was certainly his most prominent one, perhaps along with that of a snake, in a cultic context. Compare here the epode of the fourth *stasimon* of the *Bacchae*, where the chorus invoke the god to appear in one of his zoomorphic guises: either as a bull, a snake, or a lion. Plutarch mentions statues of the god in the shape of a bull and tells us of a cletic hymn the women of Elis used to sing in the local festival of Agrionia, where the god is invoked to manifest himself 'with an oxen foot'. He also informs us that in Argos, Dionysus had acquired the cult epithet ox-born (*βουγενής*). Dionysus is the divine master of disguises not only in cult, but in myth as well: in the

[376] See my earlier discussion, '*Phasma* epiphany'.
[377] Hamilton (1974, 148).
[378] Eur. *Bacch*. 920–2.
[379] Trans. Dodds (1960, ad loc.).

Anthologia palatina he is given the epithet ταυρωπός;[380] while in the homonymous Homeric hymn (7.44ff), the god undergoes several zoomorphic transformations and even creates physical entities of an illusory nature, like the phantom of a bear. Finally, in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* (40.40ff.), the god keeps changing his shape from a panther, to a lion, a serpent, a bear, a flame, and finally to that of a bull.

In summary, we have seen that in Greek myth and cult there are intimate links between zoomorphic appearances and divine epiphanies. These links appear to be more tenuous in the case of avian epiphanies and a bit stronger in the case of reptilian and bovine epiphanies. When thinking of zoomorphic manifestations, one must not forget Pan, the hybridic figure (half man, half goat) who combines in his body anthropomorphic and zoomorphic features, but who is essentially a deity. I have refrained here from providing any further description and analysis of Pan and other hybridic deities, as they are all expertly discussed by Aston in her latest book.[381]

Up to this point we have discussed divine manifestations in anthropomorphic, enacted, *effigies*, *phasma*, *pars pro toto*, and zoomorphic form. But what if the god did not look like anything at all? What if the deity manifests itself not by assuming a specific likeness but instead by manifesting his or her power through miraculous actions? Was this manifestation of divine power considered to be an epiphany?

AMORPHOUS EPIPHANY: EPIPHANIES AS MANIFESTATIONS OF POWER

The final section of this chapter examines a selection of epigraphic and literary narratives from the Hellenistic and Imperial periods which account for astounding natural phenomena and extreme meteorological conditions of a catastrophic nature, such as disastrous storms, avalanches, earth-shattering earthquakes, floods, calamitous precipitations, prolonged drought, etc.[382] These extreme natural phenomena and meteorological disasters are conceptualized as 'acts of god' and, effectively, as manifestations of divine power. It is ironical that even in our modern rationalistic society natural disasters of this kind are often referred to—and this is especially true in the case of home insurance contracts—as 'acts of god'.[383]

Returning to our epigraphic and literary sources, we find these extreme meteorological conditions and natural phenomena of a catastrophic nature referred to as ἐπιφάνεια, δύναμις, ἀρετή, ἐνάργεια, or ἐνέργεια τοῦ θεοῦ.[384] Some historians

[380] *Anth. Pal.* 9. 534.20.

[381] For more on Pan see Borgeaud (1988) and the 'Epiphanic Pan' section in chapter 4. On hybridic figures see Lissarrague (1993) and Aston (2011).

[382] However, this is not to say that the concept of epiphanies as manifestations of power is unattested in sources from the Archaic and Classical periods.

[383] An extreme application of the term occurred in May 2010, when Mr Rick Perry, the then Governor of Texas, used the phrase in a speech in Washington to describe the Gulf of Mexico oil spill as an unpreventable 'act of God'!

[384] Robert, *Opera minora selecta* I, 602.

of religion refer to these as 'miracles', a term that is not free from misleading Judeo-Christian connotations and which, therefore, is to be avoided.[385] Instead, I use the term 'amorphous epiphanies' in the sense that the human perceivers of these epiphanies do not encounter the 'other' in any particular iconic form, i.e. in the shape of a man or animal, a member of the priestly personnel, or that of a cult statue, or even in the form of a *phasma*.[386] On the contrary, the whole nature, the earth, and the sky become the canvass where the divine 'paints' his or her presence in culturally meaningful terms using a variety of natural elements and forces.

These amorphous epiphanies are commonly reported in contexts of warfare or siege. Compare here the amorphous epiphany of Zeus Panamaros at Stratonikeia in the battle against the Parthians, who besieged and finally attacked the city in 39 BC.[387] The text, preserved in a fragmentary state, is a civic decree commemorating the divine manifestation of Zeus Panamaros, to the people of the city of Panamara and their enemies. In the same decree we have an extremely vivid, almost 'cinematic' depiction of how Zeus Panamaros or Panemerios or Panemeros (as he was also known) came to the assistance of the Panamarians and fought on their side against the Parthians. In lines 7–8 we learn that the god revealed his presence through his powerful thunderbolt, which set the attackers of his temple and much of their military equipment on fire: *ὁ θεὸς μετὰ φωτὸς φλόγα πολλὴν αὐτοῖς ἐνετίναξεν*. However, the Parthians persisted and launched a second attack the following morning (lines 9–10). This time they were afflicted by a series of other uncanny meteorological phenomena, such as the deep fog that mysteriously fell around them in lines 10–11 and the severe storm and the lightning and the thunder that immediately ensued. Despite the fragmentary state of the text, it is clear that this conspiracy of nature against the attackers of the sacred precinct was interpreted by the dwellers of Panamara as a clear sign of divine favour:[388] while the Parthians were massacred with the god's help, the Panamarians were kept unharmed and unhurt (line 18), with the exception of a few superficially injured men (lines 21–2). The textual uncertainty, though, does become an obstacle for our understanding in lines 13–14: if we read the text with Roussel we understand that at some point towards the end of the battle the Panamarians shouted: 'Zeus Panamaros is a mighty god!'[389] If we read the same

[385] On Judeo-Christian miracles and their relation to the Graeco-Roman miraculous narratives, see Cotter (1999, 1–8).

[386] The term 'amorphous' is also used to differentiate what in visual art we call 'aniconic', i.e. non-anthropomorphic, non-zoomorphic, non-phytomorphic etc. representation of the divine, namely the representation of the divine through less iconic shapes, such as through a column, a baetyl, a rock, etc. Gaifmann (2012) in her latest book on aniconic representations of the divine argues convincingly enough that these more 'abstract' shapes allow for more freedom when imaging the shape of the gods. For some well-known examples of aniconic artistic representations of the divine see Dietrich (1985–6, 182ff.), Steiner (2001, 45ff.), and my earlier discussion of the *effigies* epiphany.

[387] *I.Stratonikeia* 10 with Roussel (1931). The main part of the decree was found at Panamara, and a small part was found at Pisye: Hula & Szanto 35, no. 3, col. 1 (part); Paton & Myres, *JHS* 16, 1896, 220, no. 13, col. 1 (part); Cousin, *BCH* 28, 1904, 52, ad no. 39 (part); Roussel, *BCH* 55, 1931, 70–116; Laumonier, *BCH* 61, 1937, 241; *BE* 1968, 506. For a detailed description and discussion of the narrative see chapter 2, 'Zeus in arms'.

[388] Roussel, (1931, 80): 'Le miracle exalte les fidèles qui célèbrent la puissance de leur dieu.'

[389] *Acts* 19.32–41: Paul is preaching in the theatre of Ephesus, while the people start shouting: 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.' Ephesus was claimed to be the birthplace of the goddess and the guardian

lines with Markelbach, on the other hand, we understand that it was a group of Parthians who, while deserting the battlefield, were begging for pardon and were converted by the extraordinary epiphany of the god. Merkelbach's emendation allows for this notion of an epiphanic god in action, who makes use of the intercultural semiology of natural disasters and finally succeeds in conveying his message both to the besieged and the besiegers.

There is, in fact, a remarkable narrative preserved in which the epiphanic deity appears to be 'speaking two different languages', the local dialect of personal manifestation with the besieged and the intercultural language of natural disasters with the besiegers. This is the first epiphanic narrative that we find under the title *ἐπιφάνειαι* in a decree from the acropolis of Lindos dated *c.*99 BC in the so-called Lindian Temple Chronicle (*Syll.*[3] 725 = *Lindos* II, 2).[390] The four *ἐπιφάνειαι* of the goddess appear in column D. In the first of them, we learn that the besieged, due to lack of water, were on the brink of surrendering themselves. At this very time of collective tension, Athena appeared in the sleep of one of the archons of the city (lines 13–14), and ordered him to be of good cheer (*θάρσειν* line 15), while reassuring him that she would ask her father for beneficial rain.[391] Entrusting themselves to Athena's care, the citizens of Lindos asked Datis, the general of King Dareios, for an truce of five days; if the goddess hadn't fulfilled her promises within these five days, then they would have to surrender themselves. Datis laughed (27) at the Lindians, but nevertheless granted this favour to them. 'The next day great darkness gathered over the Acropolis and copious rain broke over its middle point' (28–9). This enabled the people of Lindos to quench their thirst, while at the same time the Persian armed forces were craving water. The barbarian general was awestruck at this epiphany of the goddess (*καταπλαγεὶς ὁ βάρβα[ρος] τὰν τᾶς θεοῦ ἐπιφάνειαν*). In response, he stripped himself of all his body ornaments (ll. 34ff.) and sent them as dedications to the temple, along with other valuable belongings of his. He even made a covenant of friendship with the besieged and declared that the Lindians were under divine protection: *τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τούτους θεοὶ φυλάσσουσι*! The factual demonstration of their *θεοφιλία*,

of her *xoanon*, which had allegedly fallen from the sky. See Strabo 14.1.20; Price (1999, 23, Appendix 15 inscription).

[390] *Syll.*[3] 725 = *I.Lindos* II, 2 (99 BC) *Lindiorum de donariis et epiphaniis Minervae perscribendis decretum*. Cf. *FGrHist* D 532 with commentary 445; *SEG* 39: 727; Blinkenberg (1941, 182–3); Chaniotis (1988, 118, T13); Higbie (2003); Shaya (2005, 423–42); Richards (1929, 76–82); Dignas (2002). The stele contains four columns (A, B, C, D). The first column, A, contains the *psephisma* to erect a stele in honour of Athena, which would contain a list of the epiphanies of the goddess and the offerings that had been long accumulated in the temple 'because of the epiphany of the goddess' (*διὰ τὰν τᾶς θεοῦ ἐπιφάνειαν*). Columns B and C record the various other *anathemata* (offerings) presented in the temple by mythical and historical persons. The stele was christened by C. Blinkenberg as a 'Temple chronicle', but, if we want to be more accurate, we preferably speak of an inventory of the temple treasures. More on this in Chaniotis (1988, 56f.), who quotes Jacoby's discussion in *FGrHist* 532, and prefers to think of the inscription as an *anagraphe*. In that sense, the inscription is quite similar to the *I.Délos* 298, or *IG* II² 137ff.

[391] 'Be courageous!'; 'Cheer up!'; 'Be of good cheer!' is the standard introduction to a speech that a god delivers when (s)he appears in many Homeric epiphanic narratives: *Il.* 15.254; *Il.* 24.171; *Od.* 4.825; *Od.* 13.362; *Hom. Ven.* 193; *H. H. Dion.* 9, etc.

this special relationship that the city was enjoying with Athena of Lindos, led him to raise the siege.[392]

Effectively, then, during the siege of Lindos in 490 BC by the Persians Athena Lindia manifested herself in person in the sleep of one of the local archons but, when it came to manifesting herself to both the besieged and the besiegers she chose to do so through a series of extreme meteorological phenomena such as an ominous dark sky and excessive rainfall over the city's acropolis. It is as if Athena of Lindos decided to speak the local dialect when communicating with the local magistrates by manifesting herself privately in a familiar form (a form which perhaps corresponds to her cult statue in the acropolis; and in any case in a form similar to her most popular artistic representations) easily decipherable by those who share the same cultural references, whilst she used the international language of excessive natural disasters to denote her presence and safely convey her message to the Persians.

An analogous case of different semiotic strategies employed by the same deity to deliver his or her message across different perceivers can be seen in the doubly phrased epiphany of Athena of Ilium and Kore Soteira when Mithridates VI besieged the city of Cizycus by both land and sea in 73 BC: Kore Soteira appeared in the dreams of Aristagoras and delivered a cryptic message with decipherable cultural references for the local town clerk that, in short, translated into a promise for divine help and assistance.[393] However, when it came to the realization of that promise and the delivering of her message to the besieger, Athena of Ilium denoted her presence by using the international and intercultural sign system of aggressive meteorological phenomena; that is, by raising a disastrous storm and a boisterous wind that crushed the siege engines of the belligerent prince.

Occasionally, different morphological variants of divine epiphany appear to substitute for one another in different accounts of the same epiphanic manifestation during a siege depending on the generic context of the narrative, the medium, which preserves the narrative, and, of course, the political agenda behind it. One could hardly find a better example than Apollo's divine manifestation at Delphi in 279 BC. In Pausanias' account, Apollo's amorphous divine epiphany predominates: the god sent certain signs (*σημεῖα*) (namely, an earthquake followed by lightning and thunder) that the Gauls failed to interpret in the most appropriate way: *καὶ τοῖς βαρβάροις ἀντεσήμαινε τὰ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ταχύ τε καὶ ὧν ἴσμεν φανερώτατα*.[394] The supernatural atmosphere was further intensified when the *phasmata* of the four aforementioned heroes appeared and scared the besiegers, who later in the night had to struggle with the frost and the snow of Parnassos; and on top of that many of them were killed by a fierce avalanche. Those left suffered at the hands of the Greek army and were afflicted by a panic attack

[392] Momigliano (1975, 98–9) compares Datis' experience of the divine assistance provided to the Lindians by their tutelary deity to the experience of Heliodoros at the temple of Jerusalem *c.*180 BC, which were collected and conflated by the author of the second Book Maccabees, Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.* 5.5.1.1–8) and several others. More on the so-called 'rain-miracle' in Bremmer (2008a, 215–24.

[393] Plut. *Luc.* 10.1–4. The text is quoted and discussed in chapter 2, 'Siege epiphanies'. Athena of Ilium, like Athena of Lindos, is another local manifestation of Athena as the poliadic deity par excellence who takes immediate action when the city under her tutelage has been besieged.

[394] Paus. 10.23.1–9.

(*Πανικός*, essentially Pan's amorphous epiphany) and killed one another.[395] The repetition of the notion of *ἔκπληξις* (a stereotypical reaction of human perceivers of a divine epiphany) in this account also points in a similar direction. This continuum of extreme natural disasters was conceptualized by the perceivers as Apollo's divine epiphany in the earliest attestation of the god's divine manifestation, this time by an epigraphic source, the so-called Koan decree which reports a Delphic tradition established shortly after the unsuccessful Gallic invasion.[396]

In this particular inscription, Apollo's divine intervention is given prevalence over the soldiers who fought for the deliverance of the temple. Furthermore, Apollo comes first in the thanksgiving sacrifices list, followed by Zeus Soter and Nike. While in Justin's account of the Delphic Soteria Apollo manifested himself to the members of his priestly personnel, who cried that they could see the god fighting in the first rank dressed in most Homeric manner.[397]

Interestingly enough, Diodorus' account of Apollo's epiphany at Delphi—this time during the Persian invasion, almost a century before the Gallic one—is also construed in terms of extreme natural phenomena such as heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, and murderous avalanches, and it is also characterized as *theōn energeia* and *theōn epiphaneia*.[398] In the Herodotean account of the same event

[395] *ἥ τε ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ μανία πλεῖστον ἐξειργάσατο ὑπ' ἀλλήλων τοῖς Γαλάταις τὸν φόνον*. Both the literary and the epigraphical accounts mentioned above seem to derive from the Delphic tradition about Apollo's divine *epiphaneia*, which was established only shortly after the invasion of the sanctuary. As Champion (1995) argues very convincingly, an independent and quite different tradition was also propagated by the Aetolians, who helped the people of Delphi to defend the temple, and consequently told their own version of the story. This tradition is reflected in the recognition decrees for the first celebration of the Aetolian penteteric Sōtēria in 245. In these decrees, the element of divine intervention and Apollo's key role in the repulse of the enemies is conspicuously absent, whereas Aetolian piety and heroism are emphasized. These later inscriptions imply that the Aetolians, before Delphi, repulsed the Gallic threat. More in Champion (1995, 217). See also *SEG* 45.122.

[396] The supernatural prevails in this decree from Kos (Syll.[3] 398 = FD III 1: 483.4, dated to 279/9 BC) that commemorated the gods' manifestation and the deliverance of the Greeks (*τᾶς τε ἐπιφανείας τᾶς γεγενημένας ἕνεκεν ἐν τοῖς περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν κινδύνοις καὶ τᾶς τῶν Ἑλλάνων σωτηρίας*), and ordered thanksgiving sacrifices in honour of the god.

[397] Justin. *Epit*. 24.8.3–8: 3. *In hoc partium certamine, repente universorum templorum antistites, simul et ipsae vates, sparsis crinibus, cum insignibus atque infulis, pavidi vecordesque in primam pugnanitum aciem procurrunt.* 4. *Advenisse deum clamant, eumque se vidisse desilientem in templum per culminis aperta fastigia,* 5. *dum omnes opem dei suppliciter inplorant, juvenem supra humanum modum insignis pulchritudinis; comitesque ei duas armatas virgines ex propinquis duabus Dianae Minervaeque aedibus occurrisse;* 6. *nec oculis tantum haec se perspexisse, audisse etiam stridorem arcus ac strepitum armorum.* 7. *proinde ne cunctarentur, diis antesignanis, hostem caedere et victoriae deorum socios se adjungere summis obsecrationibus monebant.* 8. *Quibus vocibus incensi omnes certatim in proelium prosiliunt.*

[398] Diod. Sic. 11.14.3–4: *οἱ δ' ἐπὶ τὴν σύλησιν τοῦ μαντείου πεμφθέντες προῆλθον μὲν μέχρι τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Προναίας Ἀθηνᾶς, ἐνταῦθα δὲ παραδόξως ὄμβρων μεγάλων καὶ κεραυνῶν πολλῶν ἐκ τοῦ περιέχοντος πεσόντων, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τῶν χειμώνων πέτρας μεγάλας ἀπορρηξάντων εἰς τὸ στρατόπεδον τῶν βαρβάρων, συνέβη διαφθαρῆναι συχνοὺς τῶν Περσῶν, πάντας δὲ καταπλαγέντας τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἐνέργειαν φυγεῖν ἐκ τῶν τόπων.* 4 *τὸ μὲν οὖν ἐν Δελφοῖς μαντεῖον δαιμονίᾳ τινὶ προνοίᾳ τὴν σύλησιν διέφυγεν· οἱ δὲ Δελφοὶ τῆς τῶν θεῶν ἐπιφανείας ἀθάνατον ὑπόμνημα καταλιπεῖν τοῖς μεταγενεστέροις βουλόμενοι, τρόπαιον ἔστησαν παρὰ τὸ τῆς Προναίας Ἀθηνᾶς ἱερόν, ἐν ᾧ τόδε τὸ ἐλεγεῖον ἐνέγραψαν: μνᾶμά τ' ἀλεξάνδρου πολέμου καὶ μάρτυρα νίκας / Δελφοί με στᾶσαν, Ζανὶ χαριζόμενοι / σὺν Φοίβῳ, πτολίπορθον ἀπωσάμενοι στίχα Μήδων / καὶ χαλκοστέφανον ῥυσάμενοι τέμενος.*

the god manifests himself to the Delphians through his sacred weapons moving of their own accord and being found outside the temple's gates by the priest Akeratos (a *pars pro toto* epiphany easily decipherable by the community who share the same cultural references with the god); whilst the barbarians perceive his presence through the intercultural semiology of thunderbolts, avalanches, and frightening sounds that come from the temple of Athena Pronaia.[399]

To pull the threads together, so far we have looked at several different divine manifestations of deities in the course of a siege or a battle, whose epiphany consists of a series of uncanny meteorological phenomena such as deep fog, copious rain, severe and continuous storms interspersed with frightening thunder and lightning, panic attacks that literally drive the attackers out of their minds, uncanny and destructive sea storms and deadly precipitations. The question that follows naturally is, of course, why does the divine choose to manifest its presence through a series of extreme natural phenomena in the course of a siege and, more generally, in a military context?

The most likely answer is that amorphous epiphanies—which, as we have said, involve an awe-inspiring combination of natural forces and elements such as rain, precipitation, and earth tremors—would be more easily perceived by large numbers of devotees than other forms of epiphanies. Greek deities often tailored their divine morphology to the needs of their audience: they choose forms which would guarantee a higher degree of receivability. These epiphanies are perceived by two different communities: the besiegers and the besieged, who are two different peoples with different languages and cultural traditions. By manifesting their presence through forces of nature, Greek gods and goddesses decide to speak a *koinē*, that is a kind of common language, a kind of semiology that could be deciphered by both those defending a territory and those attacking. More significantly, one must not forget that these epigraphic documents emphasize primarily the commemorative aspect of the epiphanic schema (see p. 19), and they often employ epiphanies in their complex agenda of self-representation. By orchestrating these divine epiphanies by means of easily decipherable *sēmeia* (namely undisputable natural disasters and extreme meteorological phenomena) the communities who commemorated these epiphanies on stone, and then placed them in public spaces for everyone to see, succeeded in conveying their theophilic status not only to the community of synchronic viewers but also that of posterity. As Chaniotis reminds us, 'these thanksgiving dedications are also expressions of superiority'.[400]

To avoid creating false impressions about the generic distribution of these amorphous epiphanies, I conclude this section by looking briefly at the famous earthquake scene in Euripides' *Bacchae,* which also includes an amorphous epiphany that, although it does not take place in a siege context, is nevertheless closely associated with the element of confinement.[401] This time it is not a whole community that gets confined within the city walls or the walls of the temple or a sanctuary; it is the almighty Dionysus who Pentheus attempts to confine within the humble walls of his royal stables. Earlier on, the Theban autocrat has

[399] Hdt. 8.36–7. [400] Chaniotis (2005, 134).
[401] Eur. *Ba.* 576–95 with Seaford (1997, 43ff.).

imprisoned the followers of the god, who in the second *stasimon* sing a cletic hymn invoking the god and asking for divine support. The god answers the chorus' prayers by manifesting his presence through an earthquake followed up by thunder and lightning. That the chorus perceives the god as present through this series of uncanny natural phenomena becomes apparent from line 589: 'Dionysus is in the palace!' The maenads experience the standard reaction to mystic epiphanies, i.e. a mixture of awe and reverential fear, and fall on the ground.[402] Later on in the play, when Pentheus is sitting in the fir tree and has been seen by the maenads, the Stranger is no longer visible. The messenger, however, hears the god's voice urging the Bacchae to punish the human who dared to ridicule his mystery rites. Dionysus' audition is accompanied by 'a flash of solemn fire that towered between the earth and the sky' (1083: *καὶ πρὸς οὐρανὸν | καὶ γαῖαν ἐστήριζε φῶς σεμνοῦ πυρός*). What we have here is another amorphous manifestation of the god in the shape of a supernatural light, either a continuous light (with P's *ἐστήριζε*), or a momentary one (with Murray's *ἐστήριξε*), perhaps even lightning. A parallel may be seen in the sacred light that appeared of its own accord (*αὐτόματον πῦρ*) through the god's sanctuary on Parnassos;[403] or the manifestation of yet another flash of supernatural light (*ἐπιφαίνεσθαι μέγα σέλας πυρός*) that could occasionally be seen coming from his sanctuary in Krastonia in Macedonia during the god's festival.[404]

Dionysus was by no means the only deity who could signify his presence through a form of supernatural light. Other amorphous light-related epiphanies include that of Artemis Agrotera as a full moon at the battle of Marathon, and again as a flash of fire from her sanctuary in Mounychia, where Thrasybulus and his supporters were fighting against Critias' army; as well as Hecate as a cloud of fire in a moonless night at the battle for the siege of Byzantion in 340 BC, etc.[405] In fact, light has proven to be the most resilient of the epiphanic concomitant *sēmeia*, accompanying in some form (e.g. as a star, lightning, radiance, radiant garments, golden accessories, the sun, the moon, and so on) a large number of epiphanic manifestations throughout antiquity.[406] Then again, as seen in the Introduction,

[402] Compare here the reactions of Metaneira to Demeter's mystic epiphany in the homonymous Homeric hymn. More on this comparison in chapter 6, 'The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*'. For Dionysus' epiphany as related to mystic initiation see Seaford (1997, 142ff.), who also collects a plethora of passages where Dionysus appears to be closely connected to both thunder and earthquakes in myth and cult.

[403] Schol. *ad* Eur. *Phoen*. 277.

[404] [Aristot.] *mir*. 842[a] 18ff. with Dodds (1960, 213).

[405] Artemis Agrotera: Hdt. 6.120 with Pritchett (1979, 172ff.) and more recently Cole (2004, 189); in Plut. *De Glor. Ath*. 349f–50a. Artemis appears as a full moon in Salamis; Artemis as a flash of fire: Xen. *Anab*. 3.2.12; Hecate: Hesych. of Miletus in *FGrHist* 390 F1,26. Once again all the aforementioned epiphanies take place in a siege context. I discuss all these narratives in detail in chapter 2, 'The illuminating epiphanies of Artemis, Hecate, and Parthenos'. Cf. also *Kulte*, 227–36.

[406] Apollo, for example, was identified with the sun, the primary source of light, while in the homonymous Homeric hymn (440ff.) he leaps out of the ship at Crissa looking like a star at noonday (*ἀστέρι εἰδόμενος μέσῳ ἤματι*). Cf. also *TGF*, 23a Radt (Aeschylus' *Bassarai*: Orpheus awaits the descent of Apollo–Sun) with Seaford (2005, 602) who offers more references and a detailed discussion on the possible associations of Apollo and Dionysus with light in a mystic initiation context. Apollo as a star: *H.H.Apollo* 439–42 (*ἔνθ' ἐκ νηὸς ὄρουσεν ἄναξ ἑκάεργος Ἀπόλλων | ἀστέρι εἰδόμενος μέσῳ ἤματι· τοῦ δ' ἀπὸ πολλαὶ | σπινθαρίδες πωτῶντο, σέλας δ' εἰς οὐρανὸν ἷκεν·*). The participle *eidomenos* does not

light is indeed an integral structural element of the divine epiphany, which appears in the term *epiphaneia* and its cognates. No wonder it also features prominently in narratives that account for amorphous epiphanies.

SYNOPSIS

So far, I have tried to establish that Greek gods and heroes manifested themselves in many different shapes and forms. The form in which the divine chooses to manifest itself depends heavily on the spatio-temporal context of the epiphany (more on which in the next chapter) and the identity of the perceiver, since a recognizable shape increases receivability. Much of the preceding argument has focused on the differences between the various morphological variants of epiphany. The similarities, though, seem far more important. Almost all the forms of epiphanies are, for instance, accompanied by similar concomitant *sēmeia*, of which light in some form seems to be the most persistent, and they all cause their perceiver to experience similar feelings such as awe, astonishment, terror, surprise, reverential fear, and so on. More interestingly, the forms of epiphany discussed above pose similar challenges for their perceivers, of which the most important is to penetrate the initial facade behind which the divine appears and to recognize the god within. There are rich rewards for those who do penetrate the form to reach the content and dire consequences for those who do not. Seeing or listening is not enough; *idein* is not enough; the aim is always *gignoskein* or *noein* the divine. This is what can be described as the epistemological aspect of an epiphany. Epiphanies are sources of knowledge: knowledge about human and divine nature and morphology; knowledge about the limited abilities of humans and the limitless abilities of gods. More significantly, epiphanies are essentially means of constructing cultural and political identity.

leave much room for doubt. Apollo is transformed into a star. For midday as the time of the day most appropriate to epiphanic manifestations see my discussion in chapter 4, 'Midday: the hour of danger, the hour of epiphany'. Furthermore, Zeus was reported to have transformed himself into a star (ἀστὴρ γενόμενος ἀστέρι εἰκασθείς) when he manifested himself to Leda and as such fathered Castor and Polydeuces, the bright twin gods who were often said themselves to have appeared at the masts of ships as bright stars or flashes of fire. Zeus as a star: Clem. Rom. *hom.* 5.13; Tzetz. *in Lyk. Al.* 88. Dioscuri as stars: e.g. Plut. *Lys.* 12.1; Diod. Sic. 4.43.1–2; Hdt. 8.122 (Aeginetan *aristeia*) with Cook (1914, vol. 1, 760–1) for more references to similar passages.

2

Epiphanies in crisis

Because I could not stop for Death—
He kindly stopped for me—
The Carriage held just Ourselves—
And Immortality.

Emily Dickinson, *Poems: Series 1*, 1890

The previous chapter looked at the different forms in which the Greek divinities manifest themselves. One of the key concepts examined there was the correlation between the form a deity assumes in his or her epiphany and the epiphany's situational and generic context. The present chapter expands further on this idea, and investigates the contextual aspects of epiphany in more detail. Overall, epiphanies take place either in a crisis or in a cult context. This is, of course, a rather crude distinction because there is so much overlap between these two categories: a crisis is often created within a cultic context to be resolved by ritual means (e.g. the ritual search for a runaway deity in a festival context), whilst cultic epiphanies may also occur at a critical moment (e.g. the cultic invocation for gods and heroes to join a battle).[1] And yet, the distinction between epiphanies that take place in a crisis and those that take place in a cult context is a useful one to make, at least from a methodological point of view, as it lays emphasis on the degree of human control over the manifestation of the divine. Attempts to acquire control over the form and the effects of divine epiphany are more discernible in a cult context, and less so or even totally absent in a crisis context. However, as Seaford remarks, both contexts 'resemble each other in the fundamental respect that they are both occasions for the demonstration of human control over disorder'.[2]

Potentially life-threatening situations, such as fighting on the battlefield, being besieged by the enemy, and confined within the walls of a city with a minimum of food and water supplies, or suffering from a chronic or prima facie incurable disease, invite divine epiphanies. These are exceptional times and places in one's life, wherein the notions of the familiar, expected, and ordinary get severely tested. This disruption of the familiar world order opens the way for the crossing of boundaries and the superseding of limitations that are either innate to human

[1] More on the ritual search for the runaway deity in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'. For ritual invocation of tutelary gods and heroes see, for instance, the invocation of the Aiakidai before the battle of Salamis (Hdt. 8.65).

[2] Seaford (2006, ch. 4).

nature or superimposed by culture. Such disruption of the familiar invites the 'other'. Greek immortals appear when Greek mortals test their limitations and either fail or become a bit more like their gods. Epiphanies occurring in warfare, or battle epiphanies (the English translation of the German term 'Schlacht Epiphanie'), in particular, are probably the most discussed kind of epiphanies in modern scholarship.[3] This is partly due to the popularity of the *Iliad*—in which one finds some of the more spectacular battle epiphanies, which in turn were formative for the phrasing of battle epiphanies in other literary genres and situational context—and partly due to the self-consciousness with which Greek historians, like Herodotus, report these epiphanies (more on this topic in due course). However, a number of the modern discussions of battle epiphanies focus excessively on the issue of the veracity, the historical authenticity, of these divine manifestations.[4] As clarified in the Introduction, from the perspective of this book, discussing whether an epiphany really took place or not in the course of a battle or even attempting to explain these narratives away as literary conceits is beside the point. By contrast, what I consider significant is this very explanatory quality of epiphany: the fact that every culture provides various explanatory models by which an individual or a group can make intelligible (and effectively manageable) a potentially incoherent perception of reality due to life-threatening or life-changing situations. Effectively, what I argue here is that in Greek culture epiphany is one such model. This chapter looks into narratives that account for epiphanies which take place in the course of a battle, in the course of a siege, and finally I examine stratagematic epiphanies, that is political or military leaders' staging epiphanic manifestations of a deity.

Whilst the third category, that of epiphanic stratagems, is more or less self-explanatory, a brief account of why I distinguish between epiphanies occurring on the battlefield and during a siege is due at this point. Battlefield epiphanies are examined separately from siege epiphanies because they differ in terms of participation: in a siege those involved do not consist solely of combatant forces; on the contrary, extra pressure is put on the shoulders of the magistrates because civilians are involved.[5] Consequently, there is always the danger that the besieged population will experience frustration, or indeed desperation, due to lack of water and food supplies. Often a god manifests his godhead to recoup this sort of shortages, and this is precisely why I examine this type of epiphany along with narratives describing the siege of a city.

BATTLE EPIPHANIES

> The Mantineans claimed that Poseidon too manifested himself and came to their defence, and for this reason they erected a trophy in honour of Poseidon. That gods were present at times of war and slaughter amongst men has been

[3] See for instance Pritchett (1979), Speyer (1980), Wheeler (2004), Dickie (2004, 162–5).
[4] More on this topic in the Introduction.
[5] Cf. *Il.* 18.514–15.

> told by the poets who have taken as their subject matter the sufferings of heroes at Troy, and the Athenians relate in song how gods shared their toil at Marathon and Salamis. Most evidently, the military forces of the Gauls were destroyed at Delphi by the god, and manifestly by demons. Thus, it follows naturally that the Mantineans won their victory with Poseidon's help.[6]

This is how Pausanias synoptically reports Poseidon's epiphany in the battle of Mantineia (418 BC), and embeds it in the long tradition of epiphanies that occurred on the battlefield from the time of the Trojan war onwards.[7] In what follows I take up Pausanias' sampling of the three major collisions in Greek military history—on the assumption that he is reflecting here popular Greek views of continuous divine support and assistance in warfare—to discuss battlefield epiphanies in Archaic (represented by the Trojan war), Classical (paradigmatically represented by the Persian wars), and Hellenistic (represented here by the Gallic wars) times. As will shortly become clear, in the course of the Trojan war humans are presented as fighting both among and against gods of Panhellenic character—gods relevant to all the Greek cities, but specific to none. On the other hand, in the course of the battles against the Persians humans are depicted as fighting among and against heroes with 'local attachments', heroes with distinct attributes and characteristics specific to a certain locale. Finally, I argue against the common assumption that divinities of Panhellenic character re-emerge in epiphanic narratives of Hellenistic and Imperial times. The deities that manifest themselves in war throughout Greece and the Hellenized cities of Western Anatolia are closely connected to certain cities and appear in order to protect their temples and the areas in their vicinity. For this reason it is difficult to see them as Panhellenic. Paradoxically enough, though, their epiphanies are used to support claims for the Panhellenization of their cults and the athletic games established to commemorate their epiphanies; they thus become part of standard diplomatic discourse of the time.[8]

Trojan wars: fighting amongst and against Panhellenic gods

> *ὣς εἰπὼν ὃ μὲν αὖτις ἔβη θεὸς ἂμ πόνον ἀνδρῶν·*
> *Thus he spoke, and went back again, a god into the toil of men*
> Il. *13.239 = 16.726 = 17.82*

On the battlefields of Troy gods and goddesses, usually in disguise, interfere in various ways, influencing and affecting almost every possible facet of the war.[9] Divine epiphanies normally take place when a critical situation has to be dealt with, in a moment of indecisiveness, for instance, or when the battle itself takes a

[6] Paus. 8.10.8–9: *φανῆναι δὲ καὶ τὸν Ποσειδῶνα ἀμύνοντά σφισιν ἔφασαν οἱ Μαντινεῖς, καὶ τοῦδε ἕνεκα τρόπαιον ποιήσαντο ἀνάθημα τῷ Ποσειδῶνι. πολέμῳ δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων φόνοις παρεῖναι θεοὺς ἐποίησαν μὲν ὅσοις τὰ ἡρώων ἐμέλησεν ἐν Ἰλίῳ παθήματα, ἄδεται δὲ ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων ὡς θεοί σφισιν ἐν Μαραθῶνι καὶ ἐν Σαλαμῖνι τοῦ ἔργου μετάσχοιεν· ἐκδηλότατα δὲ ὁ Γαλατῶν στρατὸς ἀπώλετο ἐν Δελφοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐναργῶς ὑπὸ δαιμόνων. οὕτω καὶ Μαντινεῦσιν ἕπεται οὐκ ἄνευ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος τὸ κράτος γενέσθαι σφίσι.*

[7] On the close cultic ties between Poseidon and the Peloponnese, see Mylonopoulos (2003).

[8] More on this topic in chapter 8, 'The city and the temple as recipients of epiphanies'.

[9] With the exception of Zeus.

turn that some member of the divine assembly on Olympus does not favour, and therefore seeks to change. Typical examples of Iliadic epiphanies include Athena's epiphany to Achilles when the latter is thinking of killing Agamemnon or when the Argives contemplate their *nostos*;[10] Aphrodite's epiphany to Paris and her delivering him from certain death;[11] Poseidon's epiphany to the two Aiantes to lift their morale;[12] Apollo's epiphany to Aeneas at a very critical point of the battle, when the Trojans are almost driven away by the Achaeans, and so on.[13]

Although, these divine manifestations 'do not follow a single scenario', as Dietrich puts it, still it is possible to discern a basic structural schema in their outline: a brief description of the crisis at hand is followed by a more or less elaborate description of the divine journey from heaven to earth—which can be roughly described as 'god leaves a place x, travels through a medium y, to arrive to at place z'.[14] The ensuing mortal–immortal interaction is organized either in terms of a visual experience (when the deity is visible to the human perceiver), or an auditory experience (when the perceiver hears the disembodied voice of a deity).[15] The mortals then are confronted with the riddle of recognizing the god behind the anthropomorphic likeness. The deciphering of the concomitant *sēmeia* of the epiphany is crucial. The perceivers' responses to these epiphanies range from amazement or astonishment (*θάμβος* or *τάφος*), awe (*δέος*), terror (*τρόμος*), to a chilling feeling often accompanied by goose bumps, commonly described as tremor or shudder (*ῥίγος*, *φρίκη*), and even joy (*χαῖρε*, *γήθησεν*, *μαίμησεν*) when a friendly divinity manifests itself. Having accomplished his or her mission of intervening in human affairs, the deity departs.

In some rare cases, such as Athena's epiphany to Diomedes (5.115ff.), the arrival of the deity is in direct response to the hero's prayer.[16] When invoking Athena, the hero is careful to emphasize his patrimonial *theophilia*. The goddess offered his father Tydeus constant assistance and protection on the battlefield (Fig. 2.1), and, therefore, she is obliged to provide his son with support and friendship. This is a very interesting variation of the 'give because you have given in the past' (*da ut dedisti*) prayer formula: divine friendship and favouritism is somehow regarded as hereditary.[17] Athena manifests herself and reassures Diomedes that she has placed in his chest the same kind of physical energy and strength that his father had (*μένος πατρώϊον*). But extreme physical strength on its own is of no use when fighting not only among and against heroes but also among and against gods. The goddess then removes the mist (*ἀχλύν*) that would prevent him from distinguishing between mortal and immortal fighters: *ὄφρ' εὖ γιγνώσκῃς ἠμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα*.

It is significant that Athena uses *γιγνώσκειν*, not *ἰδεῖν*. Seeing is beside the point. The real challenge is to penetrate the anthropomorphic disguise and

[10] *Il.* 1.197–222; 2.172ff. [11] *Il.* 3.374ff. [12] *Il.* 13.15ff.
[13] *Il.* 17.319ff. [14] Dietrich (1983); Lenz (1975, 123f.).
[15] Cf. for instance *Il.* 2.172ff., where Odysseus listens to Athena admonishing him to prevent the Achaeans from sailing away, with Pucci (1994, 17). An auditory epiphany is often introduced with the formula 'nearby (s)he stood and said' (*ἀγχοῦ δ' ἱσταμένη προσέφη*) and concluded with yet another formula: 'thus (s)he spoke and (s)he heeded the voice of the goddess as she spoke' (*ὣς φάθ', ὃ δὲ ξυνέηκε θεᾶς ὄπα φωνησάσης*).
[16] On prayers proceeding epiphanies as a cultic feature see Lane Fox (1986, 116–17).
[17] Bremer (1995, 261).

Fig. 2.1. Athena (named by inscription) assists Tydeus (?) who rides out on a chariot. Other possible candidates include Diomedes and Hector. Corinthian crater dated to *c.*580 BC (Basel B 451).

identify the god within. This is indeed the kind of challenge Homeric perceivers of epiphanic encounters have to face constantly. The gods can regulate human perception by casting or raising a thick mist before their eyes. The results range from slight misconception (Poseidon pours mist before Achilles' eyes so he cannot discern Aeneas any more (*αὐτίκα τῷ μὲν ἔπειτα κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν χέεν ἀχλὺν*) to complete distortion and deception with rather dramatic consequences (as in Hector's case, who having been deceived by Athena, expects his brother Deiphobus to come to his aid, but soon realizes his folly: *ἐμὲ δ' ἐξαπάτησεν Ἀθήνη*).[18] Athena grants Diomedes the kind of vision that makes the boundaries clear: the hero is not allowed to fight against the gods, with the exception of Aphrodite. This is where the demarcation line is drawn. Transgressing these boundaries may incur dire consequences for the cosmic order, as a wounded Aphrodite reminds her brother: 'for I am in terrible pain because of a wound which a mortal man dealt me, Tydeus' son who would now fight even with father Zeus (*ὅς νῦν γε καὶ ἂν Διὶ πατρὶ μάχοιτο*)'.[19] Aphrodite makes the same point, this time in front of her father, generalizing even further: 'this dread battle is no longer between Trojans and Achaeans; but now the Danaans fight even against the immortals (*ἀλλ' ἤδη Δαναοί γε καὶ ἀθανάτοισι μάχονται*)'.[20]

The blurring of the boundaries between Diomedes' human nature and his divine vigour on the battlefield—also noted by his fellow fighters, Aeneas and Pandarus (177–8)—reaches its pinnacle when the hero rushes against Apollo 'like a god' (*δαίμονι ἶσος*) for the fourth time. The demarcation line has been crossed. Apollo brings Diomedes to reason by reminding him of his mortality: 'Come to your senses, son of Tydeus, and withdraw; do not insist on thinking like the gods, since in no way are the race of the immortal gods and that of men who walk on

[18] Achilles: *Il.* 20.321; Hector: *Il.* 22.294. On the Homeric vocabulary of sight and deception see Prier (1989, 25ff).

[19] *Il.* 5.362. [20] *Il.* 5.380.

earth similar.' Diomedes recognizes his opponent's divine intellectual and physical superiority and withdraws. He has learned his lesson and even dissuades the rest of the Achaeans from *theomachein* when he recognizes Ares himself in a human likeness (*Ἄρηϛ βροτῷ ἀνδρὶ ἐοικώϛ*) fighting by Hector's side.[21] The reader is reminded here that Diomedes can only recognize the deity behind his or her human facade because Athena has given him the power to do so. Encountering Ares in disguise causes Diomedes to shudder (*ῥίγησέν τε ἰδών*). The tables have turned for the Trojans, for their military leaders are no mere humans but Ares and Enyo (*ἦρχε δ' ἄρα σφιν Ἄρηϛ καὶ πότνι' Ἐνυώ*).

Diomedes has been previously advised to refrain from fighting any of the immortals except for Aphrodite, and, therefore, abstains from the battle. In fact, the mortal hero has now become so cautious about transgressing boundaries that it would take more than a persuasive speech by Athena to send him back to action. The next time Diomedes dares to fight against a god is literally with Athena by his side. The belligerent goddess pushes away Diomedes' human charioteer and actually mounts the hero's chariot. The chariot creaks under their weight, 'for it was bearing a terrible goddess and an excellent man' (*δεινὴν γὰρ ἄγεν θεὸν ἄνδρά τ' ἄριστον*).[22] A mortal and an immortal stand in close proximity fighting side by side.

Diomedes, however, was exceptional. Having inherited the patrimonial right to divine support, he was further endowed with the ability to recognize a god when he saw one. For the majority of his fellow fighters, penetrating a human disguise was a real ordeal. Worst of all, when confronted with supreme bravery and physical might, they could never be absolutely sure whether some god in disguise was at work.[23] And even when a god was known to be at hand, still it was essential to specify the god's identity: 'Which of the gods, mightiest ones, are you who question me standing right opposite me?', Hector inquired of Apollo, and the god revealed his identity.[24]

In Patroclus' case, on the other hand, it was quite obvious which of the gods was at hand:

> He did not see the god, but only felt the mighty hand
> that smote his shoulders from behind, so that he was stunned
> and his eyes grew dizzy. Apollo beat his helmet to the dust,
> the spear broke in his hands, his shield fell from his shoulders to the ground,
> and the god also undid the fastenings of his corselet . . .
> He did not see his executioner, but as he dies he knows and
> can say to exulting Hector that it was Zeus and Apollo
> who stripped his armour from him.[25]

For Patroclus, Apollo's epiphany coincides with the 'epiphany' of his death: *ἔνθ' ἄρα τοι Πάτροκλε φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή· | ἤντετο γάρ τοι Φοῖβοϛ.*

[21] *Il.* 5.601–6.

[22] Cf. here the high mountains and the woodland that trembled under the immortal feet of Poseidon at the beginning of book 13.

[23] Unless, of course, one is a god. Both Hera and Zeus are able to penetrate Poseidon's disguise (14.153ff.). Apollo in the likeness of Periphas advises Aeneas (17.323ff.) and the latter acknowledges the god's presence (334): *ἔγνω ἐσάντα ἰδών κτλ.*

[24] *Il.* 15.247.

[25] *Il.* 16.788–93.

Before concluding this discussion of Iliadic battlefield epiphanies, we must note that scenes of humans striving to identify the god at hand feature prominently not only in battlefield epiphanies against foreign peoples, but also in civil strife.[26] There is an outlandish and astonishing scene in the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus and Telemachus are removing the weapons from the megaron in view of the prospective fight. Athena, holding her golden lamp, is pouring light on the scenery; [27] Telemachus is amazed at the strange light—'Why, there is a god in the room' (*ἦ μάλα τις θεῶν ἔνδον, οἳ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν*) he says;[28] and his father advises him not to comment any further for this is the behaviour of gods who inhabit Olympus: *αὔτη τοι δίκη ἐστὶ θεῶν οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσι*. 'Gods may be present in an unpredictable way, not to be looked at, not to be questioned, not to be commented upon.'[29]

Note once more that Telemachus neither saw (*οὐδ' ἴδεν*) Athene, nor perceived (*οὐδ' ἐννόησεν*) her presence, unlike Odysseus, who both saw (*ἴδεν*) the goddess and perceived the sign she made with her brows (*νόησε δὲ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς τλήμονα θυμὸν ἔχων, μαίμησε δέ οἱ φίλον ἦτορ*). Unlike Diomedes, who inherits his patrimonial divine assistance and the ability to see through the human facade, Telemachus has still a lot to learn about the gods and their ways.

The Persian wars: fighting among and against local heroes

> We did not really accomplish this, but the gods and the heroes did [namely the victory against the Persians], who resented one man ruling over Asia and Europe, a man both godless and reckless. He was the one who treated both the temples and the private residencies in the same way, burning and casting them down.

Such were the words of Themistocles in his attempt to dissuade above all the triumphant Athenians from hunting down Xerxes on the Hellespont and preventing his return home.[30] The Athenians listened to him, Herodotus says, because his advice had proved to be life-saving in the past. Yet they would not have taken his word for it, had there not been in circulation a plethora of popular narratives on divine revelations and assistance provided in the course of the battles of Marathon, Salamis, Artemision, and Plataea, the hallmarks (along with Thermopylae) of the Panhellenic resistance to the Persian invasion.[31]

[26] Cf. also *Od.* 24.529, where Athena manifests her will to end the potential civic war in Ithaca through an audition.

[27] On the scene's cultic associations with the lamp of Athena in the Athenian acropolis see Parisinou (2000).

[28] *Od.* 19.40. [29] Burkert (1997a, 21).

[30] Hdt. 8.109. Xen. *Cyr.* 3.3.21 offers a Hellenocentric view on the importance that the Persians lay on divine assistance provided in the course of the battle.

[31] Of all the major battles Thermopylae was the only one where no epiphanies took place. From the point of view of this book, nevertheless, it makes sense not to allow any gods to deprive Leonidas' fighters of their glory. This section owes much to Mikalson's sensitive and informative discussion of the religious aspects of the Persian wars. See chapters 1 and 2 in Mikalson (2003).

Marathon

In the Introduction we discussed the most well-known epiphany that took place in Marathon, that is Pan's epiphany to the runner Pheidippides, as accounted for by Herodotus and Pausanias. Pan's epiphany took place prior to the battle. We also saw how the sudden and unaccountable disappearance of the hero Echetlaeus or Echetlos (both variants are attested) led the Athenians to believe that the hero had fought on their side in the battlefield of Marathon. The hero *Ἐχετλαῖος* or *Ἔχετλος* ('He of the plough handle', from *ἐχέτλη* 'plough handle'), a man of rustic appearance and rustic equipment, appeared in the battle, as they say, killed numbers of barbarians with a ploughshare, and vanished (*ἦν ἀφανής*) when the battle was over. When the Athenians inquired about his identity, the god gave no other reply apart from orders to honour the hero Echetlaeus.[32] What identifies Echetlaeus as an otherworldly being is his fierceness, his unlikely choice of the weapon, his effectiveness, and, of course, his subsequent *aphaneia*: his unaccountable disappearance. The Athenians inquired further into this case and received instructions from the Delphic oracle to establish a cult in the hero's honour.

During the battle itself, yet another epiphanic encounter was reported to have taken place: Epizelus, the son of Cyphagoras, an Athenian soldier, while fighting hard, suddenly lost the sight of both eyes, though nothing had touched him anywhere—neither sword, spear, nor missile.[33] As a result he remained blind for the rest of his life. Herodotus appears to distance himself from what has been reported:

> I am told that in speaking about what had happened to him he used to say that he thought that (*λέγειν δὲ αὐτὸν περὶ τοῦ πάθεος ἤκουσα τοιόνδε τινὰ λόγον*) a man of great stature in heavy armour stood opposite him (*ἄνδρα οἱ δοκέειν ὁπλίτην ἀντιστῆναι μέγαν*)—a man so tall that the shadow of his chin darkened his shield; but the apparition (*φάσμα*) passed him by and slew his neighbour in the line.

The narrative is built on the general guidelines of an Iliadic battlefield epiphany with extra emphasis on the superhuman size and stature and the outlandish shape of the apparition. The historian is very careful to underline that this version of the story was common currency in his time, not his own invention. Suda gives us another related branch of the tradition, according to which Polyzelus, an Athenian soldier, becomes blind after having confronted a *phasma* that had such a long beard that it was covering his shield.[34] Nevertheless he continued fighting, distinguishing the enemy by their voices.[35] They thought, as we are told, that the *phasma* was that of Pan, who came as an ally to the Athenians.

[32] See Paus. 1.32.5 with Jameson (1951, 49ff.). Admittedly a plough handle is a most unusual weapon of mass destruction! For another narrative where a functional and under normal circumstances harmless object becomes an instrument of death in the course of a battle see Paus. 1.13.7–8, where Demeter in the guise of a woman (*Δήμητρα δέ φασιν εἶναι γυναικὶ εἰκασμένην*) kills Pyrrhus of Epirus with a tile in Argos in 272 BC. Note that the participle *eikasmenē* takes us back to the Homeric disguises. See Clay (1974). Another similar case was that of Hermes, who, according to Pausanias (9.22.2), in the form of a youth armed with a *stleggis* (scraper), led the *ephēboi* of Tanagra into battle against the Eretrians.

[33] Hdt. 6.117. [34] Suda s.v. Hippias.

[35] Cf. also Aristides' (*Panath.* 108 = 202d–203d) account of an Athenian who, though slain by the arrows of the enemy, leapt back to his feet and continued fighting like an immortal. One can hardly fail to notice that this account has been modelled on the Homeric epiphanic narratives.

The fierce fighting at Marathon in 490 BC continued to haunt the collective imagination of the people centuries after it took place. The battleground of Marathon and the dead, who eventually acquired cultic status, became in popular imagination a recurrent epiphany posing vision-related challenges similar to any other epiphanic manifestations, as Pausanias' vivid description shows:

> Here every night one can hear horses whinnying and men fighting. It has never done any man good to be exposed to this manifest view (ἐς ἐναργῆ θέαν) intentionally, but if it happens unintentionally then the wrath of the divine beings will not follow him. The people of Marathon worship those who died in the battle and they call them heroes; in addition they worship the hero Marathon, where the deme gets its name from.[36]

The Athenians thought of these epiphanies not as fictions, but as a significant part of their cultural legacy and identity. This can be safely inferred from the fact that they chose to commemorate them on a rather conspicuous public space: namely on the wall of the famous Stoa Poikile. These paintings were still visible in Pausanias' time. Among historical persons, such as the Athenian commander-in-chief Callimachus and the general Miltiades, Pausanias saw depicted the epiphanic figures of Echetlaeus, Marathon, Theseus, and, strangely enough, Athena and Herakles.[37] In that particular representation Theseus was portrayed as rising from the ground, performing an impressive *anodos*; according to another line of tradition the apparition of Theseus appeared not as coming from the ground,[38] but as a *phasma* in full armour fighting against the Persians.[39] As for Herakles, we learn that as a reward for his contribution in Marathon he was honoured with a penteteric festival, the so-called Herakleia, and athletic games.[40] Athena's depiction in the Stoa Poikile as one of the epiphanic figures of Marathon is more problematic. Save for Aristophanes, who mentions an Athena-related avian manifestation of an owl before the battle, no other source mentions Athena's epiphanic involvement in the battle.[41] It seems as if the Panhellenic belligerent deities of the *Iliad* moved in more subtle ways in Marathon. The major hallmark battles were the dancing ground not of Panhellenic gods but of local heroes and deities with 'local attachments', to use Jameson's words.

Artemision

A large concentration of epiphanic revelations took place during the battles of Artemision and Salamis, the two crucial sea battles of 480. Before the battle of

[36] Paus. 1.32.3–4.

[37] Paus. 1.15.3: *ἐνταῦθα καὶ Μαραθὼν γεγραμμένος ἐστὶν ἥρως, ἀφ' οὗ τὸ πεδίον ὠνόμασται, καὶ Θησεὺς ἀνιόντι ἐκ γῆς εἰκασμένος Ἀθηνᾷ τε καὶ Ἡρακλῆς· Μαραθωνίοις γάρ, ὡς αὐτοὶ λέγουσιν, Ἡρακλῆς ἐνομίσθη θεὸς πρώτοις. τῶν μαχομένων δὲ δῆλοι μάλιστά εἰσιν ἐν τῇ γραφῇ Καλλίμαχός τε, ὃς Ἀθηναίοις πολεμαρχεῖν ἤρητο, καὶ Μιλτιάδης τῶν στρατηγούντων, ἥρως τε Ἐχετλος καλούμενος, οὗ καὶ ὕστερον ποιήσομαι μνήμην.*

[38] The vivid depiction of the Thesean *anodos* is undoubtedly due to the chthonic character that characterized most of these hero cults soon after their introduction.

[39] Plut. *Thes.* 35.8: *χρόνοις δ' ὕστερον Ἀθηναίους ἄλλα τε παρέστησεν ὡς ἥρωα τιμᾶν Θησέα, καὶ τῶν ἐν Μαραθῶνι πρὸς Μήδους μαχομένων ἔδοξαν οὐκ ὀλίγοι φάσμα Θησέως ἐν ὅπλοις καθορᾶν πρὸ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τοὺς βαρβάρους φερόμενον.*

[40] *SEG* 34.1.

[41] Ar. *Vesp.* 1084–6 (see also chapter 1, 'Avian epiphanies?').

Artemision, according to Herodotus, the Athenians were instructed by the oracle to invoke their son-in-law to come to help them (*τὸν γαμβρὸν ἐπίκουρον καλέσασθαι*).[42] They took this to mean that they should invoke Boreas, who, according to the tradition, was married to Oreithyia, daughter of Erechtheus, the Athenian king. When they were just about to sail out from Chalcis, they offered him sacrifices and called upon Boreas and Oreithyia to act as their avengers and destroy the enemy's fleet. Boreas manifested himself in an amorphous epiphany as a strong wind that caused a storm, which assailed the Persian ships. It is remarkable that the historian describes the North Wind assailing the barbarians as an unquestionable fact, but distances himself from the popular interpretation of it as an epiphany in response to the Athenian ritual invocation: *εἰ μέν νυν διὰ ταῦτα τοῖσι βαρβάροις ὁρμέουσι Βορέης ἐπέπεσε οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν*. To reciprocate for the divine assistance provided and to commemorate Boreas' epiphany—the Greek shows that that was the popular interpretation of it at that time—they built a temple of Boreas near the river Ilissos.[43]

Salamis

'Yell out the melancholy shout of ill omen / against our enemies; / the gods have ordained utter catastrophe for the Persians', sang the chorus of elderly men in Aeschylus' *Persians*.[44] The chorus here takes a Hellenocentric view, according to which the victory of Salamis was the result of a divine alliance with the Greeks and their military endeavours. Both destruction for Xerxes' army and victory for the allied Greek cities were brought about by divine providence.

And what would be a better epiphany to kick off the trail of epiphanic manifestations than a zoomorphic epiphany of the city's poliadic deity? Right before the beginning of the sea battle, or so we are told, an owl was seen flying through the fleet from the right, landing on the masthead of Themistocles' ship. It was for this reason in particular, as Plutarch informs us, that they accepted Themistocles' view and began to prepare for a naval battle.[45] The story of Athena's avian epiphany, however, is nowhere to be found in Herodotus' account of the battle of Salamis. Had this epiphanic account been in circulation in Herodotus' day, one may have expected the historian to have included it in his account of the

[42] Hdt. 7.189 with Jacquemin (1979, 189–93).

[43] Pausanias (8.27.14 and 8.36.4) attests that Boreas was worshipped in Megalopolis as well as in Athens. Annual sacrifices are offered to him and he is thought to be a *theos sotēr* ('saviour god') for dashing down Agis' machine and putting an end to the Spartan siege (*ἅτε σωτῆρα γενόμενόν σφισιν ἀπὸ Λακεδαιμονίων τε καὶ Ἄγιδος*). In Thurioi, Boreas destroyed Dionysius' three hundred ships when the latter attacked the city in 379 BC. See Ael. *VH* 12.61. To reciprocate for the godsent assistance, according to Aelian, the people of Thurioi not only offered Boreas sacrifices and an annual festival (*καθ' ἕκαστον ἔτος ἐπετέλουν αὐτῷ*), but also voted for the North Wind to be given rights of citizenship (*ἐψηφίσαντο εἶναι τὸν ἄνεμον πολίτην*) and to be allocated a house and plot of land (*καὶ οἰκίαν αὐτῷ καὶ κλῆρον ἀπεκλήρωσαν*)!

[44] Aesch. *Pers*. 282–4, trans. E. Hall (1996, 55). On the *Persae* as a literary work that deals with both cultural memory and formation of cultural identity see Grethlein (2010, 74–98).

[45] Plut. *Them*. 12.1: *Λέγεται δ' ὑπό τινων τὸν μὲν Θεμιστοκλέα περὶ τούτων ἀπὸ τοῦ καταστρώματος [ἄνωθεν] τῆς νεὼς διαλέγεσθαι, γλαῦκα δ' ὀφθῆναι διαπετομένην ἐπὶ δεξιᾶς τῶν νεῶν καὶ τοῖς καρχησίοις ἐπικαθίζουσαν· διὸ δὴ καὶ μάλιστα προσέθεντο τῇ γνώμῃ καὶ παρεσκευάζοντο ναυμαχήσοντες*.

mortal–immortal encounters that took place in the course of the Persian wars. More importantly, it might even be tricky to determine with any certainty whether the owl flying was perceived as the epiphany of the goddess herself or simply as an omen. Whichever the case, an owl, Athena's sacred bird, flying amidst the Athenian ships was perceived as a signifier of the deity's will: the sea battle must take place at Salamis.

Despite the general allusions to the help of the gods, there is no mention of an epiphany of Athena, or indeed of any other Panhellenic deity in Aeschylus' account of the battle, whilst by contrast, gods of Panhellenic stature are presented in later artistic treatments of the major battle scenes of the Persian invasion as energetically involved. In the so-called Dareios vase, for instance, the divine input in the interception of the Persian invasion is depicted on the upper level of the vase: Apate (the personification of deception) tries to lure Persia, while Hellas is lead up to Zeus by Athena flanked by Artemis and Apollo, whose festival (Carneia) was celebrated the day of the battle of Marathon.[46]

In the absence of epiphanies of any major Panhellenic deities in the *Persae*, it is even more surprising that Aeschylus chooses to relate the epiphany of a mortal man, Themistocles. In the Messenger's speech addressed to Queen Atossa, Themistocles' cunning scheme which brought Xerxes and his naval forces to destruction is presented in terms of an epiphanic manifestation; while Themistocles' status appears to oscillate between that of a god and that of a human.[47] The moment that Xerxes falls for Themistocles' misleading reassurance about his intentions to double-cross his fellow Athenians coincides with the very moment that a destructive divinity (*ἀλάστωρ ἢ κακὸς δαίμων*) makes its appearance (*φανεὶς*) in the Persian camp (354–6).

It must have become obvious by now that this discussion does not privilege the Herodotean account of the battle over the Aeschylean one on the grounds that the first has been traditionally referred to as history (with traditional claims to reality) and the other as tragedy (schematically equated with fiction). Both literary genres deal in their accounts with the same core of historical events and present them through their respective moods and registers. Both the Herodotean and the Aeschylean accounts are treated as testimonies of Athenian popular beliefs and of how integral epiphanies were to the formation of the Athenian cultural identity. When it comes to the *Persians* and its historical dimension, as Hall puts it, 'the important point is surely not its historical veracity in terms of detail, but its interest as a document of the Athenian collective imagination'.[48]

[46] Museo Archaeologico Nazionale, Naples (H3253). Cf. Furtwängler-Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei: Auswahl hervorragender Vasenbilder*, Tafeln 81–90. Munich: Bruckmann, 1906, pl. 88; *LIMC* 1.2 698, Apate I; *CVA* Naples 3253; Trendall and Webster 1971, no. III.5.6. The vase, in all probability, depicts a scene from an unknown fourth-century play that took the Persian invasion for its theme. Cf. also Chaniotis, A., Corsten, T., Stroud, R. S., Tybout, R. A., 'Magna Graecia (Apulia): Inscriptions on the Darius Vase, ca. 340–320 B.C. (56–1121)', *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Brill Online, 2012. More on the Dareios' vase and its alleged connection to a lost fourth-century tragic play, see Taplin (2007, no. 92, 235–30).

[47] For Themistocles and his attributing his ingenious ideas to a goddess (Artemis Aristoboule) see Garland (1992, 73f.). The text follows Murray's edition: Murray, G. (1960[2]), *Aeschyli tragoediae*, Oxford.

[48] Hall (1991, 5).

Other divine epiphanies that took place in the course of the sea battle of Salamis included apparently the *phasma* of a woman (*φάσμα σφι γυναικός ἐφάνη*) who appeared reproaching the procrastinating Greek navy in a loud voice and derogatory terms; the zoomorphic manifestation of the hero Kychreus; and possibly the epiphany of the Dioscuri in the shape of gleaming stars, if we are to judge from the shape of the Aegineteans' votive offerings at Delphi: three golden stars on a bronze mast.[49] But perhaps the most celebrated epiphany in Salamis was that of Iacchus, the conspicuous Eleusinian deity.[50]

Iacchus' epiphany is reported by both Herodotus and Plutarch.[51] In Herodotus' account, Iacchus' epiphany is narrated as the pinnacle of the intense emotional turmoil that both the Greeks and the Persians found themselves suffering from. Just before the beginning of the sea battle an earthquake in the Greek campsite raises the levels of anxiety and results in intense praying and divine invocations. A ship is sent to Aegina to fetch the *effigies* of the sons of the Aeacidae to their aid. The ship arrives just before the beginning of the battle and according to the Aeginetans it was that particular ship that attacked the Persian navy first.[52] Interestingly enough, in Plutarch's version the ship does not make it on time, but the Aiacidae manifested themselves in the form of *phasmata* and *eidōla*:

> Others thought they saw *phasmata* (*φάσματα*) and images (*εἴδωλα*) of armed men coming from Aegina, with their hands stretched out to protect the Greek triremes; they imagined that these were the Aiacidae, whom they had invoked in prayers before the battle to come to their help.[53]

Coming back to Herodotus' detailed account of Iacchus' epiphany; it is worth noticing that the divine manifestation is perceived by two exiles in the court of the Persian king: the Spartan Demaratus and the Athenian Dicaeus. Both witnesses are familiar with the cultural conventions of the Great Mysteria and Iacchus' procession as one of its main highlights. It is no surprise then that they are the ones who disambiguate a 'cloud of dust, such as might have been raised by an army of thirty thousand men on the march, coming from the direction of Eleusis' (*ἰδεῖν δὲ κονιορτὸν χωρέοντα ἀπ' Ἐλευσῖνος ὡς ἀνδρῶν μάλιστά κῃ τρισμυρίων*), and interpret it as part of that procession. Dicaeus even thought he recognized the Iacchus song (*καί οἱ φαίνεσθαι τὴν φωνὴν εἶναι τὸν μυστικὸν ἴακχον*) and given that there were no men left in Athens after the evacuation he concludes that the voice they heard was clearly not of this world, but a divine one. Shortly afterwards,

[49] As seen in chapter 1, '*Phasma* epiphany'; *phasma* of a woman: Hdt. 8.84; and Kychreus' zoomorphic epiphany: Paus. 1.36.1. For other divinities appearing and reproaching mortals in derogative terms see West (1966, 160). Pausanias, who visited Salamis several centuries after the actual event, saw a sanctuary that was established to commemorate the intervention of the hero. Note here that identification of the *drakōn* with the hero was not instant; Delphi had to be consulted first. Once again the process of *gignōskein* as opposed to *idein* has to be facilitated by divine knowledge, which is provided this time not by a direct physical confrontation with the divine who reveals his/her identity, but through the Delphic oracle. Dioscuri as stars: Hdt. 8.122. Cook (1914, 760–75) has a lengthy section on this narrative. As for the curious number of the stars (why three and not two?), he argues that the third must represent either Apollo or Helene. More on the astral epiphanies of the twin deities in Platt (forthcoming).

[50] More on Iacchos' epiphany in chapter 1, '*Effigies* epiphany' and chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[51] Plut. *Them*. 15.1; Hdt. 8.65. [52] Hdt. 8.84. [53] Plut. *Them*. 15.2.

we are told, this cloud of dust rose high into the air and drifted away towards Salamis, something that Dicaeus explains as a divine sign for the destruction of the Persian fleet.

In Plutarch's more colourful version 'a great light flashed out (*φῶς ἐκλαμψαι μέγα*) from Eleusis, and a sound and a voice (*ἦχον δὲ καὶ φωνήν*) filled the Thracian field right down to the sea, as though coming from a large body of men escorting the mystic Iacchus (*τὸν μυστικόν ἐξαγόντων Ἴακχον*) in a procession. Then, out of the shouting throng, a cloud (*νέφος*) seemed slowly to rise up from the land and then to come down.' It is as if in 480 the gods decided to conduct themselves in the festival that the Athenians had cancelled! Iacchus manifested himself by an audition, a reverberating sound alluding thus to its true acoustic nature.[54]

Plataea

The Aeginetan votive offerings at Delphi may or may not imply that an epiphany of the twin gods took place in Salamis. In the battle of Plataea, however, their contribution is far more certain and conspicuous. The Dioscuri or the Tyndaridai—as found in sources, where their Lacedaemonian origins are underscored—used to accompany, quite possibly in an *effigies* form, the Spartan army in their military expeditions. More precisely, a Spartan law allowed only one of the two kings accompanied by one of the Dioscuri to leave the city, whenever an army was dispatched. The other would have to remain at home to defend Sparta with the help of the remaining god.[55]

In his *Plataea elegy* (frr. 10W²–18W²) as preserved in *P.Oxy*. LIX.3965 and *P.Oxy*. XXII.2327, Simonides relates an epiphany of the twin gods that took place at Plataea.[56] In lines 29–34 of fr. 11, which probably formed the main narrative of the poem, the Dioscuri feature along with Menelaus as accompanying Pausanias, the leader of the Spartans:

> [From the Eu]rotas and from [Sparta's] town they [marched],
> Accompanied by Zeus's horsemaster sons,
> [the Tyndarid] Heroes, and Menelaus' strength,
> [those doughty] captains of [their fath]ers' folk,
> Led forth by [great Cleo]mbrotus' most noble [son,]
> . . . Pausanias.[57]

In what form did the Dioscuri appear in the Simonidean account of the Plataea battle? At first glance, fragment 11, which preserves the part where the twin gods are leaving the city along with the Spartan military leaders, appears to be alluding to the standard ritual practice of the Lacedaemonians prior to a battle rather than

[54] Deubner (1932, 73), who compares Iacchus to another personification of a song, that of Hymenaios. Cf. also *H.H.Dem*. 20 *ἰάχησε δ' ἄρ' ὄρθια φωνῇ* describing Persephone's reaction when abducted.

[55] Hdt. 5.75.2.

[56] On problems related to the generic context of these fragments and especially of fr. 11 W², see Grethlein (2010, 47–54).

[57] Translation and restoration follow West, *IEG* vol. 2, fr. 11. Cf. also Boedeker (2001, 120).

the gods' epiphany at a critical moment in the course of the battle.[58] It is possible, then, that the Dioscuri were present in the form of their wooden (?) images—in which case we are dealing with a typical *effigies* epiphany comparable to that of Iacchus, which took place in the procession on the 20th of Boedromion.[59] However, Simon Hornblower makes another equally plausible and tempting suggestion: in the battle of Plataea the Dioscuri manifested themselves via an amorphous epiphany, an epiphany comparable in form to their manifestation at Aegospotami or at Lake Regillus, and he calls that an actual epiphany as opposed to the ritualized and artistically canonized presence of the divine in the form of their *effigies*.[60] This is a rather unhelpful and anachronistic distinction, as Hornblower himself argues, since in the Greek mentality both would have been recognized as variant forms of divine revelation, as two different modalities of a Dioscuri *epiphaneia*.[61]

Hornblower's basic line of argumentation is largely based on the Spartan law mentioned by Herodotus that prescribes a one-to-one analogy between the Dioscuri and the two Spartan kings: since there was no king present in the battle (Pausanias is not one and Pleistarchus was too young to be involved), there should be no Dioskouros present in the battle either, unless, of course, Pausanias as the guardian of the king was entitled to one. Leotychidas, in command of the fleet, was also in need of one; thus leaving us with no possible explanation for the presence of both Dioscuri as found in our text other than that this was an amorphous epiphany.

The truth is that we simply don't know. Maybe under certain extraordinary circumstances Spartans were allowed to take both of their kings with them; maybe exactly because there was no king present on the battlefield they were in need of both their tutelary gods. More importantly, the poem seems to describe the procession, where the army leaves the city and marches towards the meeting point. In fact, the whole idea of a military procession marching away from the city with the *effigies* of the Dioscuri at the head of the πομπή ties in well with lines 33–4 of the poem: τοὺς δ' υἱὸς θείοιο Κλεο]μβ[ρ]ότου ἐξ[α]γ' ἄριστ[ος |]αγ. Παυσανίης. The verb ἐξάγω points forcefully towards this idea of a ritual 'escorting' of the images of the Dioscuri out of the city and into the battle, since terms such as *eisagō*, *eksagō*, *eisagōgē*, and *eksagōgē* are often associated with epiphanic festive processions.[62] The other problem is, of course, that the appearance of the Dioscuri as shining stars is a form of epiphanic revelation usually associated with naval activity or at least fighting in the vicinity of water.[63] In the sea battle of 405 BC, for

[58] Pritchett (1979, 14f.).

[59] Greeks fail to distinguish linguistically between the god and the gods' statue; they refer to both as *theos*. See further on this in chapter 1, '*Effigies* epiphany'.

[60] See Hornblower (2001, 140): 'So we have perhaps the magnificent picture of Dioscuri riding out with the Spartan army, an epiphany indeed, comparable to their appearance as stars at the battle of Aegospotami, as celebrated in epigram at Delphi . . . or at the battle of lake Regillus when the Spartans lent them to the Romans.'

[61] As shown in chapter 1, 'Enacted epiphany'.

[62] See my discussion in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[63] See for instance *Hymn. Hom. Diosk.* AHS; Plin. *NH* 2.101; Artemid. 2.37; and Athen. *Deipn.* 1.37c–e Olson. Cf. also Eur. *Hel.* 140 (412 BC): {Τε.} ἄστροις σφ' ὁμοιωθέντε φάσ' εἶναι θεώ. Cf. also Eur. *El.* 988ff.; *Or.* 1635ff., and Diod. Sic. 4.43; 4.48.

instance, they appeared flanking the mast of Lysander's ship.[64] The battle at Plataea, on the other hand, took place on dry land. It is, therefore, difficult to see in what way the epiphany of Dioscuri there could resemble the epiphany of the twin gods at Aigospotamoi, or that at lake Regillus, or that at the river Sagra, or, indeed, the Chian sea battle against Phillip II of Macedonia in 201 BC.[65]

Other possible supernatural interventions in the poem, apart from the Dioscuri one, include that of Demeter inducing fear in the barbarians to retaliate for the burning of her temple (?) in fr. 17 W² = *P.Oxy*. LIX.3965. Despite the fragmentary condition of the text, we can still read safely *φρεικ* or *φρεικωθ*, which must refer to some sort of sacred shudder as a reaction to a marvel produced by Demeter, or a marvel taking place near the temple of the goddess. From Herodotus we learn that the battle of Plataea took place in the vicinity of the goddess's sacred grove and that the goddess did not allow any of the impious Persians to die near her temple.[66] Immerwahr interprets the report that the bodies of the Persians had somehow managed to avoid falling on a sacred ground as 'the clearest indication that Herodotus himself thought of the local gods as participating in the battle'.[67]

Furthermore, in fr. 14.7 W² we learn of Zeus' nodding (*νεύσαντο*[*ς*), which may or may not point to the epiphany of Zeus Soter (in the form of his cult statue?) in the dreams of Arimnestos, the general of the Plataeans, as related by Plutarch. More specifically, Zeus Soter revealed himself in the dreams of Arimnestos and dissuaded him and the Athenian Aristides from moving the army to Eleusis. Having received a Delphic oracle that bade them fight by the sanctuary of Eleusinian Demeter and Kore they thought at first, naturally enough, that they should move the army towards Eleusis; but Zeus Soter in Arimnestos' dream vision advised them against such an interpretation and urged them to look for a local sanctuary of Demeter Eleusinia and Kore, which provided the setting for the famous victory of 479 BC.[68]

[64] Plut. *Lys*. 12.1: *Ἦσαν δέ τινες οἱ τοὺς Διοσκούρους ἐπὶ τῆς Λυσάνδρου νεὼς ἑκατέρωθεν, ὅτε τοῦ λιμένος ἐξέπλει πρῶτον ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους, ἄστρα τοῖς οὐαξιν ἐπιλάμψαι λέγοντες. οἱ δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ λίθου πτῶσιν ἐπὶ τῷ πάθει τούτῳ σημεῖόν φασι γενέσθαι· κατηνέχθη γάρ, ὡς ἡ δόξα τῶν πολλῶν, ἐξ οὐρανοῦ παμμεγέθης λίθος εἰς Αἰγὸς ποταμούς. καὶ δείκνυται μὲν ἔτι νῦν, σεβομένων αὐτὸν τῶν Χερρονησιτῶν·*

[65] See K. A. Garbrah, *ZPE* 65 (1986), 207–10. The name Dioscuri is not actually read on the inscription, but it can be safely conjectured from the rest of the text and especially from the genitive plural in lines 2–3. The suggestion was first made by L. Robert (*Op. min*. I 523) and confirmed by a text published by Sarikakis in *Χιακὰ Χρόνικά* 7 (1975), 14–27. A festival called Theophania (see line 5 of the inscription) was established to commemorate 'the epiphany that took place in the course of the battle'. Cf. also L. Robert, *Etudes épigraphiques et philologiques* (1983), 126/7 n. 3; L. Robert, *Op. min*. I 523; C. Habicht, VII *Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia* (1961), 218–33; F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte*, Chios 78; L. Moretti, *Riv.fil.* 108 (1980), 33–54; and P. S. Derow and W. G. Forrest, *Annual of the Brit. School at Athens* 77 (1982), 79–92. Garbrah (1986, 208) maintains that a divine apparition was the *aition* for holding this festival: 'it is clear that the Chian Theophaneia were celebrated to commemorate a victory granted by gods who appeared during the battle at the right moment'.

[66] Hdt. 9.65 and 9.101; cf. 9.57, 69, and 97.

[67] Immerwahr (1966, 295). For other instances where Demeter and Persephone/Kore intervene in the context of a military expedition see Plut. *Luc*. 10.4 (Phersephasa helps the people of Cyzicus), Diod. Sic. 16, 66, 4–5, and Plut. *Tim*.8 (Demeter and Persephone assist Timoleon while sailing out against Sicily).

[68] Plut. *Arist*. 11.5–6: *τὸ δὲ τῆς Ἐλευσινίας Δήμητρος πεδίον, καὶ τὸ τὴν μάχην ἐν ἰδίᾳ χώρᾳ ποιουμένοις τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις νίκην δίδοσθαι, πάλιν εἰς τὴν Ἀττικὴν ἀνεκαλεῖτο καὶ μεθίστη τὸν πόλεμον.*

To commemorate their overwhelming victory against the almighty Persians, the allied Greek cities established the communal cult of Zeus Soterios ('Saviour') and a quadrennial festival called Eleutheria (*Ἐλευθέρια*, lit. the 'liberation festival').[69] It was to this Zeus, the Panhellenic Saviour, that the Greeks offered a laborious sacrifice right after the battle.[70] The city of Plataea became the only place that was declared *asylos* (immune from war) in the Classical period, thus preparing the ground for the well-attested diplomatic practice of Hellenistic times of declaring a city *hieros kai asylos* (sacred and inviolable) on the grounds that an *epiphaneia* had taken place usually in the course of a military clash with momentous implications for the construction of the city's political and cultural identity.[71]

In conclusion, during the Persian wars the Greeks interacted more with their local heroes and demigods than with major divinities.[72] The same could be said for Pan, a god especially associated with Arcadia.[73] As for the epiphany of Zeus Soter in the sleep of Arimnestos before the battle of Plataea, it looks more like a *post eventum* fabrication of Diodorus so as to correspond with the festival of Eleutheria established in his honour. Jameson attributes the predominance of heroes in the stories from the Classical period to the popularity of their cults, their local and intimate character, and some general reluctance to visualize major deities on the battlefields.[74] Another possible explanation could be a conscious attempt on behalf of the authors who report these narratives to suppress the element of provinciality in these narratives, as perhaps seen in Aeschylus' account of the battle of Salamis.[75] I am more inclined to agree with Jameson: the predominance of local divinities on the battlefields of the Persian wars points towards a revival of interest in the local hero cults at the time of the Persian invasions. The very nature of the hero cult itself and its chthonian associations must have facilitated such identification.

The Gallic wars: fighting among local gods of potential Panhellenic radiance

It is a common assumption that in Hellenistic times the heroes and the 'gods with local attachments' (to use Jameson's phrase) of the Classical period were replaced

ἔνθα τῶν Πλαταιέων ὁ στρατηγὸς Ἀρίμνηστος ἔδοξε κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους ὑπὸ τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἐπερωτώμενον αὐτόν, ὅ τι δὴ πράττειν δέδοκται τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, εἰπεῖν· 'αὔριον εἰς Ἐλευσῖνα τὴν στρατιὰν ἀπάξομεν ὧ δέσποτα, καὶ διαμαχούμεθα τοῖς βαρβάροις ἐκεῖ κατὰ τὸ πυθόχρηστον'. τὸν οὖν θεὸν φάναι διαμαρτάνειν αὐτοὺς τοῦ παντός· αὐτόθι γὰρ εἶναι περὶ τὴν Πλαταϊκὴν τὰ πυθόχρηστα, καὶ ζητοῦντας ἀνευρήσειν. τούτων ἐναργῶς τῷ Ἀριμνήστῳ φανέντων, ἐξεγρόμενος τάχιστα μετεπέμψατο τοὺς ἐμπειροτάτους καὶ πρεσβυτάτους τῶν πολιτῶν, μεθ' ὧν διαλεγόμενος καὶ συνδιαπορῶν εὗρεν, ὅτι τῶν Ὑσιῶν πλησίον ὑπὸ τὸν Κιθαιρῶνα ναός ἐστιν ἀρχαῖος πάνυ Δήμητρος Ἐλευσινίας καὶ Κόρης προσαγορευόμενος. See also the relevant discussion in chapter 8, 'Authoritative function'.

[69] Garland (1992, 82ff.). [70] Thuc. 2.71.2.

[71] On decrees of sacredness and inviolability, see Rigsby (1996, 1–9).

[72] Cf. also Jameson (1951, 50); Vandiver (1991, 109); Harrison (2000, 83, n. 51).

[73] More on Pan in chapter 4, 'Epiphanic Pan'. See also Borgeaud (1979, 80) and Jost (1985, 476).

[74] Jameson (1951, 50, n. 3) passim.

[75] Cf. Hall (1996, 137), who argues convincingly enough for a conscious attempt to 'make the Salamis victory Panhellenic rather than Athenian'.

on the battlefield by gods very similar to the Iliadic ones. In the age that follows the death of Alexander the Great and his belligerent *epigonoi*, heroes 'with local attachments' may still come to the defence of places of particular interest to them, but it is usually gods of Panhellenic stature that are credited with the victory and get a mention in the community's public documents and official decrees. Compare here the heroes Hyperochos, Laodokos, Pyrrhos, and Phylakos, who manifested themselves in Delphi when the Gauls attacked the temple of Apollo in 279 BC. Nevertheless, it was Apollo, the tutelary god of Delphi, who was credited with the victory against the impious barbarians: *ἐγένοντο τοῦ θεοῦ ποιήσαντος τὸ νίκημ[α κτλ.*[76]

The Gallic attack against Delphi and the spirited resistance of those defending the sacred temple of Apollo was considered to be of major importance by the Greek historians, such as Plutarch and Polybius, who place it on the same level of importance with the Persian wars.[77] In Pausanias' account, Apollo's divine epiphany in an amorphous form predominates: the god sent certain *sēmeia* (namely, an earthquake followed by lightning and thunder) that the Gauls failed to interpret in the appropriate way: *καὶ τοῖς βαρβάροις ἀντεσήμαινε τὰ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ταχύ τε καὶ ὧν ἴσμεν φανερώτατα.*[78] As seen in chapter 1, Apollo's amorphous epiphany is also given prominence in the decree from Kos dated to 278 BC which commemorated the god's manifestation and the deliverance of the Greeks, and ordered thanksgiving sacrifices in honour of the god.[79]

Both the literary and the epigraphic accounts mentioned above seem to derive from Delphic tradition about Apollo's divine *epiphaneia* that was established only shortly after the invasion of the sanctuary. The emphasis in the Aetolian tradition is quite the opposite of this. This version is reflected in the recognition decrees for the first celebration of the Aetolian penteteric Soteria in 245.[80] In these decrees, the element of divine intervention and Apollo's key role in repulsing the enemies is conspicuously absent, whereas Aetolian piety and heroism are emphasized. These later inscriptions imply that the Aetolians, before Delphi, repulsed the Gallic threat.[81] It is striking that the predominance of divine intervention re-emerges in another recognition decree from Smyrna, where Apollo's *epiphaneia* has been replaced by the more general reference to *τήν τε ἐπιφάνειαν τῶν θεῶν* (l. 6).[82] The epiphany in the Smyrna recognition decree can be interpreted in four different ways: a) it could denote the demigods in Pausanias' account,[83] or b) Apollo and the White maidens in Diodorus,[84] or c) even Zeus Soter and Apollo, the dedicatees of the recognition decrees of 246/5, or d) it could refer to the appearance of Apollo, Artemis, and Athena which is reported in Justin.[85] This last possibility would suggest that the Smyrna decree reconciles, in a way, the two

[76] *FD* III 1: 483.4. Cf. also *I.Smyrna* 574, 4 and Paus. 10.15.2: *δύο τε Ἀπόλλωνος ἀγάλματα ἔστιν Αἰτωλῶν, ἡνίκα σφίσιν ἐξειργάσθη τὰ ἐς Γαλάτας*. Is he the same hero who defended the temple of the god some two centuries ago, this time against the Persians? Cf. Hdt. 8.38. In a sacrificial calendar dated to *c.*200 BC from Erythrae (*I.Erythrai* 207, 91; cf. also 201, number 35, a28) a hero named Epimachos is honoured along with Herakles by the demos.

[77] Polyb. 2.35.7, Plut. *Cim*. 1.1. [78] Paus. 10.23.1–9. [79] *Syll.*³ 398, 17–20.

[80] Champion (1995, 217) passim. Cf. for instance *Syll.*³ 402, the recognition decree from Chios.

[81] See also *SEG* 45, 122. [82] *I.Smyrna* 574 (*c.*214 BC).

[83] Paus. 10.23.2. [84] Diod. Sic. 32.9.5.

[85] *Epit*. 24.8.5 (see also ch. 1, n. 397); see further Champion (1995, 216).

contradictory traditions by incorporating two Aetolian deities (i.e. Athena and Artemis) into the Delphic tradition. In any case, Apollo or Artemis or even Athena Pronaia, who came to the aid of the Delphians, distinct though it may be from the *ἐπιχώριους ἥρωας*, are not exactly the Panhellenic gods of epic. On the contrary, these deities retain their local attachments and they only operate when their own sacred ground is under threat.

Likewise, in Pergamon Zeus Sabazios helped King Attalos II Philometor to defend the city against the Tolistoagians and fought by the side of Antiochos when the latter defended the city against the Gauls;[86] while some fifty years later (183 BC) Athena Nikephoros assisted Eumenes II to defend the city against Prusias of Bithynia.[87] The Dioscuri defended Chios against Philip V of Macedon (201 BC), Artemis Hiakynthotrophos fought on the side of the people of Kos (200 BC), and Zeus Osogo defended Olympus (first century BC);[88] Parthenos in Crimean Chersonesos came to the aid of Diophantos as early as the third century BC, and in Carian Stratonikeia, Zeus Panamerios or Panamaros (both cult titles attested on inscriptions) defended his temple and the local population from the Parthians, who attacked the city under Libenius in 39 BC.[89]

In summary, the tutelary gods and goddesses of the Hellenistic and Imperial times demonstrated an extraordinary mobility and determination to defend their sacred places and mingle with the local populations in the battle.[90] Their activity is attested all over the Greek-speaking world, from the Greek mainland and the islands to the Hellenized cities of Western Anatolia. These epiphanic accounts were often embedded in city decrees (*ψηφίσματα*) that aimed at supporting the cities' claims of sacredness and inviolability (*ἱερός . . . ἄσυλος*) and of the Panhellenization of the sacred festivals and athletic contests established in honour of their tutelary epiphanic deity.[91] Thus, some of these cities used the epiphanies of their local deities to acquire control over that specific cult on a Panhellenic level. Simultaneously they invite comparison with Panhellenic cultic centres, such as

[86] The epiphany of Zeus Sabazios is mentioned in the letter of Attalos III to the people of Pergamon, which also stipulates new regulations concerning the cult of the god: *OGI* 331, *I.Pergamon* 248. The statue of Zeus Sabazius was to be put next to that of Athena Nicephoros. Sacrifices, processions, and a mysteric festival were also to be instituted in honour of the god.

[87] The inscription dates to 182 BC. It mentions the festival of Nikephoria, which was established to commemorate the victory of Eumenes II against Prusias of Bithynia in 183 BC and the epiphany of the goddess. This Athena Nikephoros is different from the older Athena Polias, whose festival was called Panathenaia. A petition for other cities to recognize the city of Pergamon as *asylos* was issued. The lower part of the inscription preserves the beginning of the reply of the city. See Rigsby (1996, 369–70, no. 177) and Welles 49. Cf. also M. Segre, *Hellenica* V, 1948, 117; contra J. and L. Robert, *Bull épigr.*, 1952, 127; Walbank (1957, 502–3).

[88] Dioscuri: *IG* XII 6; Garbrach, *ZPE* 65 (1986), 207–10; *Syll.*[3] 1064. Artemis Hiakynthotrophos: *PP*42 (1987), 110–19; Habicht, *ZPE* 77 (1989), 92–4. Zeus Osogo: *I.Mylasa* 306; Le Bas-Waddington 400. *Gymnikoi agōnes* in honour of the god are mentioned in *I.Mylasa* 112 = Le Bas-Waddington 411.

[89] Parthenos of Chersonesos: *IosPE* I[2], 344 = *FGrHist* 807. Cf. also the Diophantos decree (*IosPE* I[2], 352; *Syll.*[3] 709) which I discuss in detail in the ensuing section. Zeus Panamerios or Panamaros: *I. Stratonikeia* 10; Roussel, *BCH* 55 (1931), 70–116; *LSAM* 69; cf. *I.Stratonikeia* 266, 248.

[90] Chaniotis (2005).

[91] More detailed discussion of the topic in chapter 8, 'The city and the temple as recipients of epiphanies'.

Plataea and Olympia, which were the first to be declared *asyloi*, and were thought to be common temples of all the Greeks.

SIEGE EPIPHANIES

> Even there was a use for God—
> A word of rage in lack of meat, wine, fire,
> In ache of wounds beyond all surgeoning.
> Robert Graves, *Recalling War*, 1938

Tutelary gods and goddesses were thought to inhabit the same land as the polis placed under their protection.[92] Respect for the ground that the polis occupied meant respect for its deities and an invasion of the poliadic ground could have been equated with an assault against its tutelary gods. The treasuries of the temples were always a major attraction for the besiegers, and the danger of sacrilege was always imminent. It comes then as no surprise that in many narratives securing divine help in critical moments of sieges was the only and the constant concern of the beleaguered city. Attempts to secure divine alliance range from simple praying to the patron deity/ies to extreme exhibitions of devotion to it/them.

A good example of this defence strategy is provided by the people of Ephesus who, while besieged by Croesus, consecrated their city to Artemis by attaching the city walls to the temple of the goddess, tying them together with ropes.[93] Thus the whole city became an offering (*ἀνάθημα*) to the goddess and secured its inviolability (*ἀσύλια*). In other moments of crisis, when the threat of plundering was imminent, the deity explicitly stated his/her intention to protect the sacred ground from the attack of the enemy on his/her own, without any help from the human defenders. Such was the case of Apollo Delphios, who when asked by the panic-stricken inhabitants of Delphi about the best possible way to protect the god's treasuries from Xerxes, replied that the humans should take care of their own affairs and they should entrust the protection of the sacred treasure to the god, who manifested his presence through certain miraculous actions (for which see the battle epiphanies section).[94] Diodorus reports that the Delphians commemorated the divine manifestation of the gods on an inscription still visible in his day.[95]

[92] Cole (2004, 30). [93] Hdt. 1.26.1; Polyaen. 6.50; Ael. *VH* 3.26.11–22.

[94] Hdt. 8.36: *ὁ δὲ θεός σφεα οὐκ ἔα κινέειν, φὰς αὐτὸς ἱκανὸς εἶναι τῶν ἑωυτοῦ προκατῆσθαι. Δελφοὶ δὲ ταῦτα ἀκούσαντες σφέων αὐτῶν πέρι ἐφρόντιζον.* cf. Diod. Sic. 32.9.5: *Ὅτι οἱ ἐν Δελφοῖς ὄντες κατὰ τὴν τῶν Γαλατῶν ἔφοδον θεωροῦντες πλησίον ὄντα τὸν κίνδυνον ἐπηρώτησαν τὸν θεὸν εἰ τὰ χρήματα καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ἀποκομίσωσιν ἐκ τοῦ μαντείου πρὸς τὰς ὀχυρωτάτας τῶν πλησίον πόλεων. ἡ δὲ Πυθία τοῖς Δελφοῖς ἀπόκρισιν ἔδωκεν προστάττειν τὸν θεὸν ἐᾶν τὰ ἀναθήματα καὶ τἄλλα τὰ πρὸς τὸν κόσμον τῶν θεῶν ἀνήκοντα κατὰ χώραν ἐν τῷ μαντείῳ· φυλάξειν γὰρ ἅπαντα τὸν θεὸν καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ τὰς λευκὰς κόρας. ὄντων δὲ ἐν τῷ τεμένει δυεῖν νεῶν παντελῶς ἀρχαίων Ἀθηνᾶς Προναίας καὶ Ἀρτέμιδος, ταύτας τὰς θεοὺς ὑπέλαβον εἶναι τὰς διὰ τοῦ χρησμοῦ προσαγορευομένας λευκὰς κόρας.*

[95] Diod. Sic. 11.14.3. Diodorus' text mirrors to an extent the Herodotean account.

In the narratives discussed below the deities appear spontaneously, or they respond to the repeated entreaties of their protégés either in sleep or in the waking reality of certain individuals (who are privileged enough to perceive the manifestation and powerful enough to affect the life of a community, such as the magistrates and the city's priestly personnel), or manifest themselves in front of the whole besieged city to assist them in their need.[96] They come to provide the besieged city with either water or food or, even more specifically, sacrificial victims, when the siege coincides for instance with a sacred festival. Such was the case with the Cyziceans who were supposed to celebrate the festival of Persephone, but due to Mithridates' siege they lacked a black heifer for the sacrifice:

> It appears that the deity, also, admiring the bravery of the men of Cyzicus, encouraged them by many manifest signs (*σημείοις ἐναργέσι*), and especially by the following. The festival called Pherephattia (the festival of Persephone) was at hand, and the people, in lack of a black heifer for the sacrifice, fashioned one of dough, and brought it to the altar. And the sacred heifer reared for the goddess (*ἡ δ' ἱερὰ καὶ τρεφομένη τῇ θεῷ*) was pasturing, like the other herds of the Cyzicenians, on the opposite mainland, but on that day she left the herd, swam over alone to the city, and presented herself for the sacrifice (*κατ' ἐκείνην δὲ τὴν ἡμέραν ἀποκριθεῖσα τῆς ἀγέλης μόνη διενήξατο πρὸς τὴν πόλιν καὶ κατέστησεν ἐπὶ τὴν θυσίαν αὑτήν*).[97]

Alternatively, gods may appear to aid the besieged by demonstrating their *theophilia*, a special relationship with the deity who for that reason protects them. Factual demonstration of the *theophilia* of the besieged normally results in the besiegers' raising the siege. It is important to note here that the same divine actions that a city perceives as divine assistance can be interpreted as theodicy (divine punishment) by its enemies. A common denominator of all these narratives is that divine manifestation becomes the essential prerequisite for raising a siege, where a resolution between the warring sides is for various reasons out of question.

The following deities are most commonly described as defending their sacred ground: a) Athena (most commonly associated with polis centres such as Athens, Sparta, Tegea, Lindos, Miletus, Phocaea, Syracuse, etc.); b) Artemis, Parthenos, and Hecate (most commonly associated with the countryside, as in Lousoi, Arcadia, Sparta, Ephesus, Aulis, Pherai, and Brauron); and c) Zeus (mainly but not exclusively associated with mountain tops, but also found in settlements, such as Olympia, Dodona, Pherai, Mt Hymettos, Mt Ithome). Apollo (usually associated with religious centres that lie far from human settlements such as Delphi, Thermon, Ptoion, Delos, Didyma, etc.) is another deity that comes to defend his sanctuaries when under threat, but we shall not include him in this discussion since we have already examined in detail his involvement in human affairs during the Gallic attack against Delphi (see the previous section, as well as chapter 1, 'Amorphous epiphany').

[96] More on the topic in chapter 8, 'Authoritative epiphanies: god-sent prestige and validity'.

[97] Plut. *Luc.* 9.10.1. Mithridates' ships had blocked the narrow strait that separates the city from the mainland. see also chapter 6, 'Sacrifice'. The narrative and its function are discussed in chapter 8, 'Explanatory function: epiphanies and making sense of the world'.

'Whilst seeking Athena's help, move your own hands too'

σὺν Ἀθηνᾷ καὶ χεῖρας κίνει.
παροιμία ἐπὶ τοῦ μὴ χρῆναι
ἐπὶ ταῖς τῶν θεῶν ἐλπίσι καθημένους ἀργεῖν.
τίθεται δὲ ἐπὶ γυναικῶν,
καὶ μάλιστα ὀφειλουσῶν ἐργάζεσθαι.
Suda α 4525

Locally bound cult and cult places are, as expected, rarely named in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; only Apollo and Athena have temples due to their conspicuous poliadic character.[98] On Achilles' shield, Athena is portrayed as leading the besieged in a heroic exodus from the city walls.[99] Athena's title as Polias originally referred to her quality as guardian of the polis, meaning originally the acropolis of a city.[100] With this quality of the defender of the city she came to assist the besieged Lindians, who, when attacked by Dareios in the spring of 490 BC, were hard hit by a shortage of water. In the previous chapter and in particular in the section which discussed amorphous epiphanies, we saw how Athena successfully employed extreme weather conditions to manifest her powers both to those besieged and to their besiegers in order to protect her acropolis at Lindos (Rhodes) from the Persian enemy. The first epiphanic narrative we find under the title *Ἐπιφάνειαι* in the decree from the acropolis of Lindos dated to 99 BC preserves this story.[101]

The third out of the four epiphanies recorded in the same inscription is also relevant to our discussion.[102] Athena of Lindos appeared again in the sleep of Kallikles, one of her ex-priests, during the siege of Rhodes by Demetrios Poliorketes in 305 BC and bade him to ask Ptolemy Soter for help (*ἐπιστᾶσαν αὐτῶι καθ' ὕπνον τὰν θεὸν* 97–8). Kallikles' initial reluctance to accede to the goddess's demands resulted in a continuum of epiphanies:

τὸ μὲν οὖν πρᾶτον ἰδὼν τὰν ὄψιν
ὁ Καλλικλῆς ἡσυχίαν εἶχε· ἐπεὶ δ[ὲ π]ολλά-
[κ]ις τὸ αὐτὸ συ[ν]έβαι[ν]ε, συνεχῶς γὰρ ἓξ
[ν]ύκτας ἐφισταμένα τὰν αὐτὰ[ν] ἐποι- 110
εῖτο ποτίταξιν.

Although Kallikles had a dream vision of the appropriate course of action, he remained idle. And because he continued to ignore the (divine) order, the goddess appeared in Kallikles' dreams continuously for six nights in a row and ordered him to do the same thing.

[98] Dietrich (1985–6, 173).

[99] Cf. *Il.* 18.509–19. A miniature Iliadic world is depicted on a piece of art, which is eventually part of the Iliadic narrative. Note here that Athena and Ares are fashioned out of gold, a material that reflects the radiance of their bodies, and that they are portrayed as beautiful and larger than the humans they lead to battle.

[100] See for instance *SEG* 30.380; *LSAG*^{2} 443 no. 9a (late 7th cent.), an inscription carved on the fortification of Tiryns, where Athena and Zeus are associated with the acropolis and the communal ritual performed there.

[101] *Syll.*^{3} II 725. See chapter 1, 'Amorphous epiphany'.

[102] Blinkenberg (1941, 182–3). The first and the third are complete, the second is fragmentary, while the fourth is illegible. For the most recent commentary on the inscription see Chaniotis (1988) (from an epigraphic aspect), and Higby (2003) for a literary-historical interpretation.

Finally, Kallikles confessed his dream to the *bouleutai* of the city who dispatched one of the *prytaneis* to deliver the petition for help to Ptolemy. Diodorus informs us that Ptolemy, who was given the title Soter right after the siege of Rhodes in 304,[103] responded and provided them with provisions and reinforcements. To commemorate the event Ptolemy made a sacrifice and dedicated twenty pairs of horns of oxen.

Plutarch in his vita of *Lucullus* preserves a very interesting narrative that provides an interesting *comparandum* to our inscription:

> 10.1 *Ἔοικε δὲ καὶ τὸ θεῖον ἐπιθαρρῦναι τοὺς Κυζικηνούς, ἀγασθὲν αὐτῶν τὴν ἀνδραγαθίαν, ἄλλοις τε σημείοις ἐναργέσι, . . . 2 ὄναρ δ' ἡ θεὸς Ἀρισταγόρᾳ τῷ τοῦ δήμου γραμματεῖ παραστᾶσα· 'καὶ μὴν ἔγωγε' εἶπεν 'ἦκω τὸν Λιβυκὸν αὐλητὴν ἐπὶ τὸν Ποντικὸν σαλπιγκτὴν ἐπάγουσα. φράσον οὖν θαρρεῖν τοῖς πολίταις.' 3 θαυμαζόντων δὲ τὴν φωνὴν τῶν Κυζικηνῶν, ἅμ' ἡμέρᾳ σάλον εἶχεν ἡ θάλασσα κατιόντος ἀκρίτου πνεύματος, αἵ τε μηχαναὶ τοῦ βασιλέως παρεστῶσαι τοῖς τείχεσιν, ἔργα θαυμαστὰ Νικωνίδου τοῦ Θεσσαλοῦ, ῥοίζῳ καὶ πατάγῳ πρῶτον ἀπεδήλουν τὸ μέλλον· εἶτα νότος ἐκραγεὶς ἄπιστος τὸ μέγεθος τά τ' ἄλλα συνέτριψε μηχανήματα ὥρας βραχεῖ μορίῳ, καὶ τὸν ξύλινον πύργον ἑκατὸν πηχῶν ὕψος ὄντα διασείσας κατέβαλεν. 4 ἱστορεῖται δὲ τῶν ἐν Ἰλίῳ πολλοῖς καθ' ὕπνον ὀφθῆναι τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν, ἱδρῶτι πολλῷ ῥεομένην καὶ ὑποφαίνουσάν τι τοῦ πέπλου παρερρωγός, λέγουσαν ὡς ἀρτίως ἥκοι βοηθήσασα Κυζικηνοῖς· καὶ στήλην τινὰ δόγματα καὶ γράμματα περὶ τούτων ἔχουσαν ἐδείκνυον Ἰλιεῖς.*
>
> It appears that the deity, also, admiring the bravery of the men of Cyzicus, encouraged them by many manifest signs . . . 2. The goddess [Kore Soteira] appeared in a dream to Aristagoras, the town clerk, saying: 'For my part, I have come, and I bring the Libyan flute player against the Pontic trumpeter. Bid the citizens, then, be of good cheer.' 3. While the people of Cyzicus were lost in wonder at the pronouncement, at daybreak the sea began to toss under a boisterous wind that descended against it, and the siege engines of the king along the walls—the admirable works of Niconides the Thessalian—by their creaking and rattling showed what was going to happen: then a south-west wind, bursting forth with incredible fury, broke to pieces the other engines in a very short time, and shook and threw down the wooden tower, which was a hundred cubits high. 4. It is related, too, that the goddess Athena appeared to many of the inhabitants of Ilion in their sleep, dripping with sweat, showing part of her *peplos* torn away, and saying that she had just come from assisting the people of Cyzicus. And the people of Ilion used to show a stele which had on it certain decrees and writings relating to these matters.[104]

Kore Soteira appeared and helped the people of Cizycus defend themselves against the belligerent Mithridates, who besieged the city by both land and sea in 73 BC. The reader is struck by the inventiveness of the divinity and her determination to get the message across. The goddess appeared in the sleep of the *grammateus* ('town clerk') Aristagoras to deliver a cryptic message subsequently translated into the intercultural language of natural disasters brought upon the enemy.[105] Not long afterwards, Athena of Ilion manifested herself in the

[103] As it is most commonly assumed after Pausanias (1.8.6).

[104] Plut. *Luc.* 10.1–4.

[105] On Aristagoras and the exact nature and title of his civic office, see Habicht (2005). On dream epiphanies and omens delivered via epiphanies in Plutarch's Lives in general, see Brenk (1977, 219–35), where there is also a detailed exposé of the Kore's epiphany to Lucullus. See especially pp. 229–30.

dreams of the common folk of the city, who also claimed to have had a clear message of the divine alliance the people of Cyzicus enjoyed. Plutarch seems to be aware of both strands of contemporary epiphanic tradition, which he seems to have gathered by talking to informers or, more likely, from reading chronicles and inscriptions analogous to the ones he says that the people of Ilion established to commemorate their direct line of communication with the divine. The two types of epiphanic narrative, albeit complementary rather than contradictory, are obviously different: whatever degree of intricacy and sophistication the narratives of the commoners lacked in comparison to Aristagoras' enigmatic account, they overcompensated for with graphic details about the deity's physical appearance at the point of delivering her message. And whatever degree of pathos Aristagoras' epiphanic account may have lacked, it made up for with bold imagery and literary flair. In both cases, the divine epiphanies of both Kore Soteira and Athena of Ilion were emplotted to enhance the agency of their respective perceivers: on the one hand to authorize Aristagoras to deal with the military crisis by liaising with Lucullus and, on the other hand, to elevate the people of Ilion to a theophilic status.[106]

Recalling last night's dream and turning to it for advice when faced with a major public crisis seems to have been a rather common coping mechanism, already found in the Iliadic world. The reader is reminded of the opening of the *Iliad*, where the Argive army is confronted with plague coupled with famine and annihilation. After nine days, an assembly is gathered, and Achilles asks either for a soothsayer, or a priest, or a dream interpreter to elucidate the cause of Apollo's anger.[107] Divine assistance is expected steadfastly and it is sought after eagerly in the dreams of the army officials. Similarly, in all three of the epiphanies reported in the Lindian *Anagraphē*, Athena fulfils her duties as the standard poliadic deity by manifesting herself in the dreams of the privileged few (one of the city magistrates, her priest, and ex-priest respectively) and pointing out the right way to deliver the community from the imminent danger.[108] We may emphasize here the fact that the apparitions in the three narratives mentioned above are explicitly identified as *epiphaneiai* in the Greek. Lührmann, then, is not right in thinking that the term *epiphaneia* refers exclusively to manifestations of divine power, or amorphous epiphanies as we called them in chapter 1, and never in the sense of the personal appearance of the deity.[109] Both the two members of the local authorities in Lindos and Cyzicus as well as the Lindian ex-priest dreamt of the goddess in person. Nevertheless, in two out of the three cases, Athena also

[106] It seems that Ilion was, for its own reasons, quite sensitive to the pressure the third Mithridatic war had put other cities under, such as Kyzikos, in the region. Mithridates laid siege to Kyzikos in 73 BC. An inscription from Assos (*I.Assos* 11a) gives details about the difficulties the population faced at the time of the siege. On Plutarch's portraiture of Lucullus and the politics of his time, see Swain (1992) and, more recently, Tröster (2008).

[107] *Il.* 1.62–4: *ἀλλ' ἄγε δή τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα | ἢ καὶ ὀνειροπόλον, καὶ γάρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν, | ὅς κ' εἴποι ὅ τι τόσσον ἐχώσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.* *ὀνειροπόλος* means dream interpreter or diviner. Kessels (1978, 26) takes it to mean dream viewer (*Traumseher*) and assumes that some sort of practice equivalent to incubation must be referred to.

[108] More on the function of these narratives in chapter 8, 'Authoritative function: god-sent prestige and validity'.

[109] Lührmann (1971, 189–90).

demonstrated her presence by causing natural disasters—in Rhodes a flood and in Cyzicus a storm—that raised the spirit of the besieged and brought desperation to the besiegers. As I have shown in chapter 1, it seems as if the deity decided to speak the local dialect of personal manifestation with her people and the international, or rather intercultural, language of natural disasters with the barbarians.

Interestingly enough, Athena did not ally herself exclusively with the besieged. Thucydides reports how Athena was credited with the capture of Lekythos in 424/3 BC, and received a monetary reward for her services.[110] The Spartan general Brasidas thought that the capture (*ἅλωσις*) of Lekythos in Chalkidike was wrought by Athena, the tutelary deity of the besieged, therefore he consecrated the 30 silver *mnas*—the same amount of money he had proclaimed to give to whosoever would first mount the wall—to the temple of Athena and made the whole place a sacred precinct.[111]

Given Thucydides' antipathy to *τὸ μυθώδες*, the fact that this is only one of a couple of passages reported where epiphanic vocabulary, imagery, or even allusions to epiphanies can be found is quite surprising. Perhaps Thucydides' eagerness to clarify that the capture of the city was simply due to the weak architecture of the wooden tower that the defenders had built on an old house is easier to be understood. The house, or so we are told, being overweight, collapsed suddenly and the great noise scared the Athenian army and made them take to flight.

Look at the bright side of war! The illuminating epiphanies of Artemis, Hecate, and Parthenos

In lines 2–21 of the honorary decree from Crimean Chersonesos (Fig. 2.2) we read about Herakleidas, son of Parmenon, who proposed and carried a decree that prescribed public honours, possibly for a local historian called Syriskos, on account of a literary work he had composed on the divine epiphanies of Parthenos, the tutelary deity of the city of Chersonesos: [*ἐπειδὴ*] *Συρίσκος Ἡρακλείδα τὰ*[*ς*] | [*ἐπιφαν*]*είας τὰς Παρθένου φιλ*[*ο*]- | [*πόνως*] *γράψας κτλ.*[112] The inscription is dated roughly to the third century BC. Syriskos seems to have composed a temple chronicle of analogous nature and function to the Lindian *Anagraphē*

[110] Thuc. 4.116: *ὁ δὲ Βρασίδας* (*ἔστι γὰρ ἐν τῇ Ληκύθῳ Ἀθηνᾶς ἱερόν, καὶ ἔτυχε κηρύξας, ὅτε ἔμελλε προσβαλεῖν, τῷ ἐπιβάντι πρώτῳ τοῦ τείχους τριάκοντα μνᾶς ἀργυρίου δώσειν*) *νομίσας ἄλλῳ τινὶ τρόπῳ ἢ ἀνθρωπείῳ τὴν ἅλωσιν γενέσθαι, τάς τε τριάκοντα μνᾶς τῇ θεῷ ἀπέδωκεν ἐς τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ τὴν Λήκυθον καθελὼν καὶ ἀνασκευάσας τέμενος ἀνῆκεν ἅπαν.*

[111] Slater (1988, 129). To remark on the epiphanic overtones of Brasidas' impassioned speech to the Acanthians would be to state the obvious. The speech was delivered in an attempt to persuade them to revolt against the Athenians (Thuc. 4.86.1–87.9). Brasidas' soteriological language reminds us of another similar speech delivered in the Athenian law court by Demosthenes in his *De Corona* (18.172–3). Both speeches contain stereotypical elements of divine speeches delivered in epiphanies that take place in the course of a battle or siege, and not, as Slater has assumed, in parodies of epiphanies as found in comedy. Greek orators, politicians, and forensic speech-writers alike often interspersed their speeches with epiphanic language and terminology in an attempt to appeal to the deep-rooted belief of their audience in the unfailing readiness of the divine to respond to human need by manifesting themselves.

[112] *IosPE* I² 344. Cf. also Blinkenberg (1941, 156, n. 1). Syriskos was quite possibly Herakleidas' son, although the opposite cannot be excluded either.

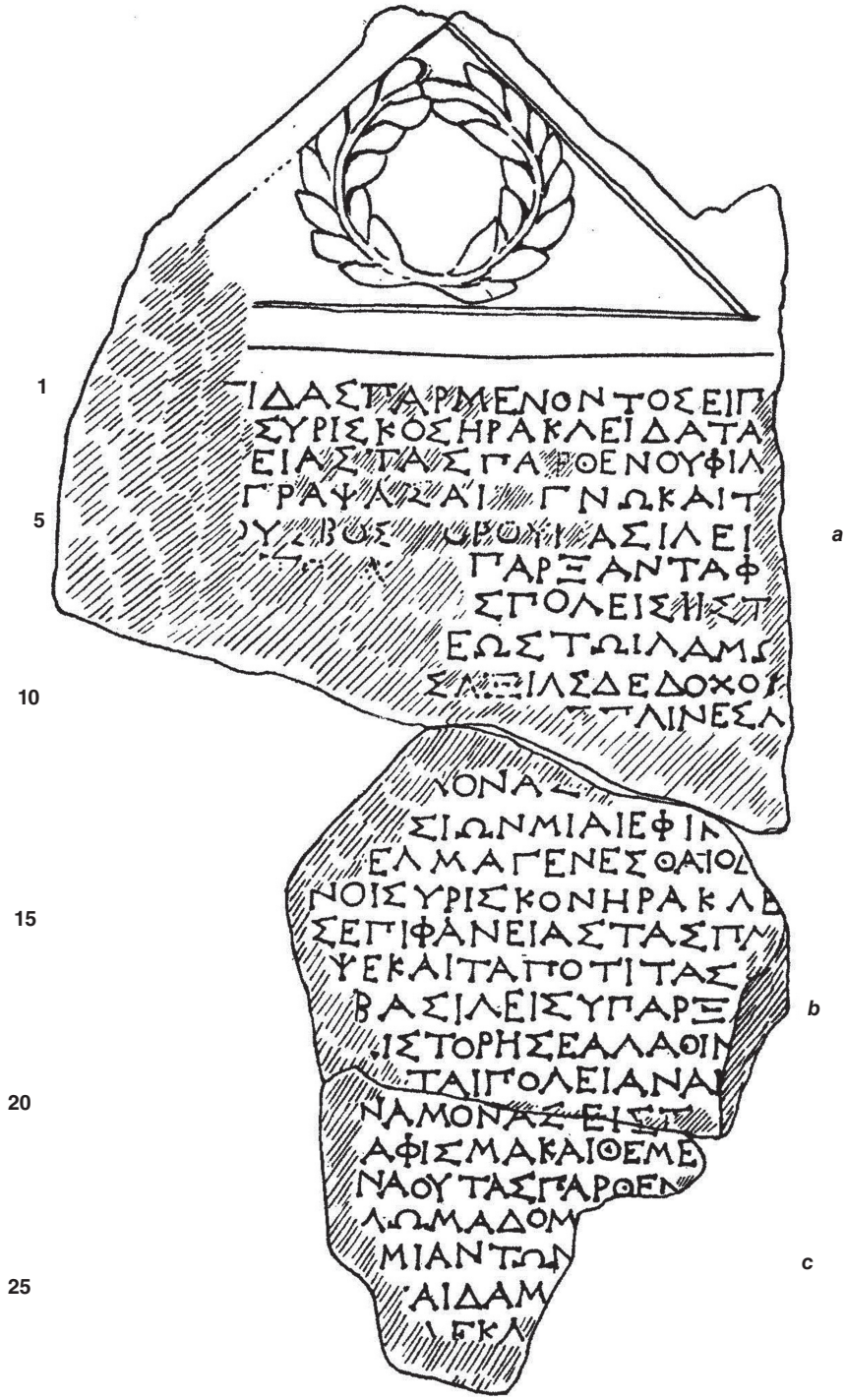


Fig. 2.2. The honorific decree of Syriskos (*c.* third century BC). Author's drawing after Latyshev (1916, 290).

(most commonly known as the Lindian Chronicle), in which another local historian, named Timachidas, related the divine epiphanies of Athena of Lindos (Rhodes). Temple chronicles formed, especially in the Hellenistic age, a blooming and most prolific literary genre that in all probability had been in constant use and development since Herodotus' time, and possibly even earlier (according to Dillery).[113] They were brought into existence partly by the need of the priestly personnel to publicize the miraculous deeds of their patron deity, and partly by the need of the local community to preserve and commemorate their individual religious, political, and cultural identity in a context of increasing cultural and ideological uniformity.[114]

Parthenos, the tutelary deity of the city of Chersonesos, resembled the Greek Artemis (Fig. 2.3), as far as both her iconographic identity and her function in the civic pantheon are concerned.[115] Both Artemis and Parthenos appear to be closely associated with moments of imminent civic crisis and extreme danger. They are both said to have come to the aid of their protégés in the course of a military clash or a siege. Parthenos' close associations with the battlefield are obvious in yet another honorific decree, this time honouring Diophantos, a general (*stratēgos*) of the Pontic king Mithridates VI. Diophantos came to help the people of Chersonesos in Crimea to fight the Scythians and other forces which, under Palakos,

Fig. 2.3. Artemis Parthenos' iconographic identity. Late fourth- to early third-century coin from Tauric Chersonesos. Æ 22 mm (6.49 g, 9h). Diagora-, magistrate. *XEP*, Artemis Parthenos left, striking stag, lying left, with spear in her right hand, holding bow in her left / Bull butting left on horizontal club; in exergue, *ΔΙΑΓΟΡΑ* above horizontal bowcase.

[113] Cf. Blinkenberg (1941, 182): 'Tous les sanctuaires grecs, non pas seulement ceux des dieux-guérisseurs, étaient des foyers de récits sur des apparitions divines, sujet que traitait aussi la littérature.'

[114] On temple chronicles in general see Chaniotis (1988), Dignas (2002), Higbie (2003), Dillery (2005), and Clarke (2008). On the role these documents played in Hellenistic politics and war see Chaniotis (2005, ch. 9).

[115] Cf. Anokhin, *Khersonesa* 78; SNG BM Black Sea 769–71; SNG Stancomb 478–9; SNG Copenhagen 9–10 var. More on Parthenos' iconographic identity in Anohin (1980), Bilde (2003), and (2009). On Artemis as belligerent deity see Ellinger (1993, 290–1 and 222–32) and Cole (2004, 189ff.). On Artemis as poliadic deity and her multiple cultic identities see Petrovic (2010a). I am indebted to David Braund for discussing with me the epiphanies of Parthenos.

beset the city *c.*107 BC.[116] His expedition was crowned with victory, for Parthenos helped both Diophantos and his army. In lines 20–6 we read:

Παλά-
[*κο*]*ῦ δὲ συνεργεῖν τὸν καιρὸν ἑαυτῶι νομίζοντος καὶ συναγαγόντος τοὺς ἰδίους πάντας, ἔτι δὲ*
[*καὶ*] *τὸ τῶν Ῥευξιναλῶν ἔθνος συνεπισπασαμένου, ἃ διὰ παντὸς Χερσονασιτᾶν προστατοῦσα*
[*Πα*]*ρθένος, καὶ τότε συμπαροῦσα Διοφάντωι, προεσάμανε μὲν τὰν μέλλουσαν γίνεσθαι πρᾶξιν*
[*διὰ τ*]*ῶν ἐν τῶι ἱερῶι γενομένων σαμείων, θάρσος δὲ καὶ τόλμαν ἐνεποίησε παντὶ τῶι στρατοπέ-*
[*δωι· Δ*]*ιοφάντου δὲ διαταξαμένου σωφρόνως, συνέβα τὸ νίκαμα γενέσθαι βασιλεῖ Μιθ*[*ρ*]*αδά-* 25
[*ται Εὐ*]*πάτορι καλὸν καὶ μνάμας ἄξιον εἰς πάντα τὸν χρόνον*

While Palakos thought that the moment suited him and gathered all his own men, indeed drew in too the people of the Roxolani. But Parthenos, who always protects the citizens of Chersonesos, was present then too with Diophantos; she pre-signified the action that would take place through signs that occurred within her temple, and thus inspired the whole camp with courage and boldness. But it was due to Diophantos' judicious leadership that the good and ever-memorable victory came along for King Mithridates.

What happened within the temple, or the nature of the signs sent out by the goddess that foretold Diophantos' victory, cannot be known above the level of conjecture; the Greek allows us to understand that these signs had been interpreted as the benevolent predisposition of the goddess and a secure token of her favouritism for Mithridates' general. From all we know, the signs that the goddess employed so as to foretell the favourable outcome of the battle could be related to her *xoanon* (an *effigies* epiphany of sorts), or even to the sacred light and the torches that had been burning in the temple.[117] From the inscription itself we can only tell for sure that after what happened in the temple the whole army was armed with courage and valour. It is highly unlikely though that the whole army witnessed these signs (*sēmeia*), as this would imply that the whole army could be accommodated within the goddess's temple. It is far more probable that they just had to rely on an authoritative person's witness, such as that of their general or a priestess. And whilst the precise nature of these divine signs cannot be determined with absolute certainty, for our purposes it suffices to say that this pre-announcement of the victory in the impending battle was identified as the epiphany (*ἐπιφάνεια*) of the goddess.[118] In line 49 of the same inscription we learn that a festival called Partheneia was established in honour of the goddess, quite possibly to commemorate past instances where the goddess provided the decisive resolution on the battlefield.

[116] *IosPE* I² 352 = *Syll.*³ 709.

[117] Strabo (7.4.2) mentions her temple, the Partheneion, and her *xoanon*.

[118] Rostowzew (1920, 204) notes: 'Diese Vorverkündigung darf als richtige *ἐπιφάνεια* angesehen werden.

A similar example of Parthenos' epiphany in the course of a battle is apparently commemorated in another Crimean inscription,[119] where we also learn that Parthenos intervened in the course of a battle in the past to protect the people of Chersonesos. This is at least the meaning that terms such as *σωτηρίας* (7), *σωθείς* (9), and *κίνδυνος* (10) convey. We have already found the word *kindynos* in that sense in the Koan decree of 278/9 BC (*Syll.*³ 398), which commemorated Apollo's manifestation and the deliverance of the Greeks (*τᾶς τε ἐπιφανείας | τᾶς γεγενημέναις ἕνεκεν ἐν τοῖς περὶ | τὸ ἱερὸν κινδύνοις καὶ τᾶς τῶν Ἑλλά- | νων σωτηρίας*). The term *σωτηρία* referring to epiphanies taking place in a military context can also be found in the inscription relating the epiphanies of Zeus Panamaros (*I.Stratonikeia* 10, lines 3–5). In the same part of the inscription, *κινδύνων* is a fair and functional conjecture:

ἐπει[δὴ ὁ μέγιστος Ζεὺς Πανάμαρος]
[καὶ πρότερον πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἐπιφανεῖς ἐνήργησεν ἐνεργεία]ς εἰς τὴν τῆς πόλ[ε]ως σωτηρίαν ἐκ παλ[αιῶν χρόνων —]
[— μ]άλιστα δὲ νῦν, ἠγωνισμένου καὶ πεφηνά[ντος τοῦ θεοῦ τοῖς πολεμίοις,]
[διεσώθη τὸ ἱερὸν ἐκ τῶν κινδύνων καὶ τοῦ περιστάντος αὐτὸ καιροῦ·]

. . . since the great Zeus Panamaros also in the past has performed numerous and great epiphanic manifestations to save our city in times of yore . . . This time in particular, however, it was because he fought and manifested his godhead to the enemies that the temple was saved from the danger and the perilous circumstances . . .

Strictly speaking, of course, the *kindynos* of line 4 is not in our text; it is supplied by Roussel on the basis of numerous semantic and linguistic parallels, such as the honorary decree from Bargylia, where *kindynos* refers to the epiphany of Artemis (Kindyas?) taking place once more in a military crisis;[120] or the letter of Attalos III to the people of Pergamon, where *kindynois* refers again to a military crisis, and the help provided in the course of the battle by Zeus Sabazios.[121] The best parallel, though, comes from an inscription from Lagina which relates the epiphanies of its tutelary goddess Hecate.[122] The word *sōtērias* also refers to civic deliverance from a siege by means of divine manifestation in a Koan recognition decree that informs us about the military activities of Artemis Hyakinthotrophos (or Hiakynthotrophos).[123] Returning to our inscription from Chersonesos, we can now see that the terms *sōtērias* and *kindynos* must refer to some specific military crisis,

[119] *IosPE* I² 343, 5–17. Rostowzew (1920, 205) thinks that in the remaining piece of the inscription, which is now lost, an *epiphaneia* of Parthenos must have been related. L. 7 *δι' αὐτὰν σωτηρίας*: Rostowzew has *βοηθείας* instead.

[120] Roussel (1931, 70–116). Robert, *EA* 1937, 459, n. 3. Robert rightly emphasizes the epiphanicity of the Carian gods (Artemis Hyakinthotrophos, Zeus of Panamara, Hecate of Lagina).

[121] *OGI* 331; *Inschr. von Pergamon* 248; Robert, *BCH* (1928), 438–41. See also Launey (1950, vol. 2, 899–901): 'Je pense que les apparitions de Zeus Sabazios à Pergame sont de caractère guerrier.'

[122] According to this epigraphic document (*I.Stratonikeia* 512), published for the first time in its entirety by Robert (1937, 462), the city was delivered from a serious military danger, and gained its freedom and its autonomy, as well as its prosperity, thanks to the constant assistance and support of their tutelary goddess, Hecate (A, 7–11): *διεσώθη ἐ- | κ τῶν κινδύνων καὶ ἐκ τοῦ περιστάντος αὐτὸν καιροῦ, | καὶ ἐλεύθερος καὶ αὐτόνομος ἐγένετο καὶ τῶν με- | γίστων ἀγαθῶν κύριος κατεστάθη, τῆς Ἑκάτης | ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις συνπαρισταμένης αὐτῶι κτλ.*

[123] *PP*42 (1987), 110–19; Habicht *ZPE* 77 (1989), 92–4; Robert, *Hellenica* 7 (1949), 114–16; Rigsby (1975, 403–9).

where the goddess helped the Greeks against the barbarians. Perhaps Parthenos' *epiphaneiai*, which Syriskos related in his history, took place on the battlefield, or were related to moments of collective military tension.

Earlier on, when speculating on the nature of the divine *sēmeia* that pre-signified the ensuing victory for the Chersonesians in Diophantos' decree, I mentioned the possibility that these divine signs could have been related to the light and the torches that had been burning in the temple during the siege of the city. In fact, this hypothesis gains further support from several other parallel epiphanic narratives that account for Artemis' divine epiphanies accompanied by some form of light in the course of a siege.

Artemis is often involved in narratives where light plays the prominent role and the emphasis is laid on the distinction between the deep darkness of the night (since apparently that was the time the besiegers usually attacked the besieged city, taking advantage of the unawareness of the besieged). Such light could either be natural or artificial, such as moonlight or torchlight. The Athenians, for instance, fighting the Persians under the light of the full moon, attributed their victory at Marathon to Artemis Agrotera and established a festival in her honour;[124] while Plutarch implies that Artemis Mounychia manifested herself as a full moon to facilitate the Athenians in their Herculean task in the battle of Salamis: *τὴν δ' ἕκτην ἐπὶ δέκα τοῦ Μουνιχιῶνος Ἀρτέμιδι καθιέρωσαν, ἐν ᾗ τοῖς Ἕλλησι περὶ Σαλαμῖνα νικῶσιν ἐπέλαμψεν ἡ θεὸς πανσέληνος*.[125] The battle was fought on the 16th of the month Mounychion, a date that was henceforth sacred to the goddess. The goddess, whose sanctuary overlooked the straits where the final battle took place, was rewarded by either the establishment or the upgrading of the Mounychia festival.[126]

In a second group of epiphanic narratives, Artemis appears to be strongly associated with the mental activity that provides ideas and plans to overcome difficulties related to extreme danger in a siege context. In a sense, Artemis is perceived as the main goddess who provides decisive resolutions in the course of a siege. Athena, on the contrary, who we would normally expect to be associated with mental activity, appears to be confined to the dream realm (as in the case of the three epiphanies recorded in the Lindian *Anagraphē*), with the possible exception of her epiphany in Thucydides.[127] Artemis Aristoboule, for instance, was credited with providing Themistocles with the idea of fighting in the restricted, secluded area of Salamis and thus was also credited with the victory delivered by that idea.[128]

The cult epithet *Phōsphoros* points clearly towards the close associations of Artemis with light in general, and with her 'luminous' intervention in the course

[124] Hdt. 6.120. For her festival see Parke (1977, 54, 185), Pritchett (1979, 172–5), Parker (1996, 116, 153, 187, 270, n. 63), and Cole (2004, 189).

[125] Plut. *De glor. Ath.* 349f–350a with Pritchett (1979, 173–6), who expresses his reservations as to whether such an important battle would have taken place in the deep darkness, and Cole (2004, 190).

[126] Garland (1992, 72).

[127] Since we are not explicitly told, for instance, that Brasidas did not have a dream where Athena revealed to him that she was responsible for the siege of Lekythos.

[128] Plut. *De Herod. malignit.* 869c–d. Themistocles himself established a temple in honour of the goddess in Melite.

of the battle in particular.[129] It was Artemis Phosphoros, for instance, who in 404 BC helped Thrasybulus to escape to Mounychia safely, by manifesting herself as a column of fire and illuminating his way through untrodden paths. The epiphany of Artemis Phosphoros at Mounychia was thought of as being of cardinal importance for the restoration of democracy in Athens.[130] In Clement's narrative Thrasybulus' escape with the help of Artemis Phosphoros is compared to the Jewish exodus from Egypt, as facilitated by the natural darkness and Jehovah's column of light.[131] The passage is worth quoting at length:

> But further, when Thrasybulus was bringing back the exiles from Phyla, and wished to elude observation, a pillar became his guide as he marched over a trackless region. To Thrasybulus by night, the sky being moonless and stormy, a fire appeared leading the way (*πῦρ ἑωρᾶτο προηγούμενον*), which, having conducted them safely, left them near Mounychia, where is now the altar of Phosphorus (*ἔνθα νῦν ὁ τῆς Φωσφόρου βωμός ἐστι*). From such an instance, therefore, let our accounts become credible to the Greeks, namely, that it was possible for the omnipotent God to make the pillar of fire, which was their guide on their march, go before the Hebrews by night. (*ὅτι ἄρα δυνατὸν τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ προηγεῖσθαι ποιῆσαι τοῖς Ἑβραίοις νύκτωρ στῦλον πυρὸς τὸν καὶ καθηγησάμενον αὐτοῖς τῆς ὁδοῦ.*)

Another deity with the cult title *Phōsphoros* assisted Byzantion when beset by Philip.[132] Hesychius of Miletus reports that the dwellers of Byzantion managed to resist successfully the attack of Philip of Macedon in 340/39, having secured the alliance of a deity, probably Hecate.[133] Hecate, or so we are told, assisted them by sending clouds of fire in a moonless rainy night; thus, she made it possible for them to see clearly and fight back against their enemies. By some sort of divine instigation the dogs began barking, thus awakening the Byzantians and putting them on a war footing.[134] The Greek is not clear about the identity of the god or goddess that protected the people, but judging from the fact that later on they raised a statue of Hecate holding up the torches, it is possible that she is the deity involved. Moreover, the barking of dogs is often associated with Hecate and sometimes signifies her arrival.[135] We can also adduce here

[129] *Kulte*, 227–36 provides an in-depth analysis of both Artemis' and Hecate's cultic title Phosphoros and their association with light. Cf. esp. pp. 230–1 where the same narrative on Hecate's epiphany to Philip is discussed.

[130] Cole (2004, 191).

[131] Clem. Al. *Strom.* 1.24. Contemporary sources do mention the remarkable alliance between Thrasybulus' democratic party and the divine. See for instance Xen. *Hell* 2.4.14.4–15.1.

[132] Hesych. of Miletus (*FHG* 390 F1, 26): *Καὶ δὴ ἂν ταύτην ἐξεῖλε ῥᾳδίως νυκτὸς ἐπιλαβόμενος ἀσελήνου καὶ ὄμβρου καταρραγέντος ἐξαισίου, εἰ μή τις αὐτοῖς τοῦ θείου γέγονε συμμαχία τοὺς κατὰ τὴν πόλιν κύνας πρὸς ὑλακὴν ἀναστήσαντος καὶ νεφέλας πυρὸς τοῖς ἀρκτῴοις ἐπαγαγόντος μέρεσιν. Ἐξ οὗπερ οἱ δῆμοι διεγερθέντες καὶ θερμῶς τοῖς πολεμίοις συνενεχθέντες ἤδη τὴν πόλιν ὑπὸ τῷ Φιλίππῳ γενομένην ἐρρύσαντο ἀναλαβόντες τοὺς διαφθαρέντας πύργους τοῖς ἐκ τῶν τάφων παρακειμένοις λίθοις καὶ ἀνυφάναντες τὰς ἐπάλξεις τοῦ τείχους· οὗ δὴ χάριν Τυμβοσύνην τὸ τεῖχος ἐκάλεσαν λαμπαδηφόρον Ἑκάτης ἀναστήσαντες ἄγαλμα. Αὖθίς τε πρὸς ναυμαχίας τραπέντες περιφανῶς τοὺς Μακεδόνας ἐνίκησαν. Καὶ τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ διαλυθέντος τοῦ πολέμου Φίλιππος παραχωρεῖ Βυζαντίοις.* Cf. also Steph. Byz. s.v. *Βόσπορος*.

[133] *I.Stratonikeia* 1101: Zeus Panemerios and Hekate are celebrated together for having saved the city from great dangers (ll. 2–3), and both of them are called *epiphanestatoi theoi* (l. 6). In the decree from Lagina mentioned above (*I.Stratonikeia* 512) the goddess is said to have rendered the demos of the city free and autonomous through her divine support. Cf. also Robert, *E.A.* 461–2.

[134] Robert comments on both passages in *Les stèles funeraires de Byzance gréco-romaine* (1967, 155–9).

[135] See Farnell, *Cults* II, p. 508.

Eustathios' passage, where again it is Hecate with her torches that 'brought into light' the secret underground hiding place from which the men of Philip intended to come out in the middle of the night and attack the citizens of Byzantion:

> *Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνος τὸ Βυζάντιον πολιορκοῦντος [καὶ] διορύξαντος κατὰ τὴν πολιορκίαν εἴσοδον κρυπτήν, ὅθεν ἀφανῶς οἱ ὀρύττοντες ἤμελλον τοῦ ὀρύγματος ἀναδῦναι, ἡ Ἑκάτη φωσφόρος οὖσα δᾷδας ἐποίησε νύκτωρ τοῖς πολίταις φανῆναι, καὶ τὴν πολιορκίαν [οὕτω] φυγόντες Φωσφόριον [οἱ ἐγχώριοι] τὸν τόπον ὠνόμασαν.*[136]
>
> When Philip of Macedon besieged Byzantion and tunnelled during the siege a secret entrance, from which those who had dug the tunnel intended to spring forth stealthily, Hecate being Phosphoros (i.e. the 'bringer of the light'), provided torch light for the enemy to make themselves manifest to the citizens; thus, the besiegers abandoned the siege and the locals called the place Phosphorion (i.e. 'the place where the light was brought forth').

As seen in both the Introduction and chapter 1, light has been a most conspicuous concomitant *sēmeion* and an integral element of divine epiphany in Greek culture, but it also seems to have been more closely linked to some deities, who were thought of as more light-emitting or light-controlling than others. Parthenos, Hecate, and Artemis (the latter two primarily but not exclusively with the cult titles of Phosphoros) seem to have been among these deities.[137] In the narratives discussed above, Artemis and Hecate Phosphoros in particular appear to be associated with light, which features prominently either in a literal or a metaphorical sense: either some form of natural or artificial light accompanies the deity's epiphany—and, thus, enables their protégés to defend themselves against their enemies—or the divine epiphany coincides with the mental process of illumination. In this metaphorical sense, the illuminating epiphanies of Artemis and Hecate Phosphoros 'throw light' on the best defence plan and, thus, provide the decisive resolution. Alternatively, the belligerent deity intervenes in favour of her devotees not by illuminating their minds and providing a miraculous getaway for them, but by throwing the minds of the enemy into darkness and thus causing indecisiveness and confusion, which eventually leads them to their deaths.[138]

[136] Cf. also Dionys. *Per.* 142 in *GGM* II, pp. 242–3.

[137] Artemis Soteira ('the Saviour') and Agrotera ('of the countryside') were also prone to luminous epiphanies, or so we are told by Pausanias in 1.40.2–3 and 7.26.2–5 respectively. Artemis Soteira intervenes and causes confusion among Mardonius' men. Mardonius' army, having attacked Megara, wanted to retreat to Thebes, where their leader himself was. However, Artemis thwarted their plans in the following way: first she misguided them into travelling in the middle of the night and then she made them mistake a stone for the Megarian enemies (*γνώμῃ δὲ Ἀρτέμιδος νύκτα τε ὁδοιποροῦσιν ἐπιγενέσθαι καὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ σφᾶς ἁμαρτόντας ἐς τὴν ὀρεινὴν τραπέσθαι τῆς χώρας*). Having thus spent all of their arrows in this futile attack against this pseudo-enemy, they were massacred by the Megarians when the latter attacked them the next day. The emphasis in this narrative is on the fact that the whole expedition takes place in the middle of the night and in a mountainous landscape, as well as on the false evaluation of the danger. Artemis was traditionally considered as both the mistress of the bow and the wild mountainous landscape. The Megarians reciprocated by establishing a bronze statue of Artemis, who in turn acquired the cult title Soteira. On Artemis Agrotera see the following footnote.

[138] In fact, Pausanias (7.26.2–5) records yet another illuminating epiphany of Artemis in the course of a siege in which physical light and light as a symbol of the mental process of illumination coexist. The Aigeiratai were under siege by the Sikyonians. Pausanias places this attack in prehistoric times. Modern historians prefer to postulate a date in the Archaic era. In order to avoid a direct military confrontation with the enemy that outnumbered them, the besieged devised the following: they

To conclude, Artemis and Hecate are reported to have run to assist their besieged protégés, and, in the process of doing so, to have employed some form of light, in a literal or metaphorical sense, thus performing what can be described as 'illuminating epiphanies'. Given the close associations of Parthenos of Chersonesos and Artemis, one may not be very far from the truth if one claims that the epiphanic signs (*sēmeia*) which Parthenos employed to pre-signify (*prosēmainō*) Diophantos' victory in the relevant honorary decree (*IosPE* I² 352 = *Syll.*³ 709) mentioned above involved some form of light, natural or artificial. For instance, they could have been related to the sacred light and the torches that had been burning in the temple, or some supernatural formation of light that was seen by the army or some sacred officials and which was subsequently interpreted as the epiphany of the goddess herself. Alternatively, the goddess may have employed this other process of metaphorical 'spirited' illumination, and revealed to Mithridates' general the right course of action against the attacking Roxolani. Whatever Parthenos' illuminating *epiphaneia* exactly consisted of, it empowered the army to fight victoriously and to defeat their enemies.

Zeus in arms

Curiously enough the second epiphany recorded in the course of the Peloponnesian war—the first being that of Athena at Lekythos discussed above—took place in yet another city of Chalkidike: Aphytis. Zeus Ammon manifested himself to Lysander and bade him to raise the siege of Aphytis, in 403 BC. The head of Zeus Ammon appeared on local coinage probably struck between 400 and 358 BC and this by itself attests in the best possible way to the importance attached to that epiphanic revelation by the local population.[139] In Pausanias' account the god appeared to Lysander in waking reality and in the middle of the night (*νύκτωρ ἐπιφανέντα Ἄμμωνα*);[140] while in Plutarch the god was said to have appeared in Lysander's dream (*κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους παραστῆναι τὸν Ἄμμωνα*).[141] In both cases, Lysander is said to have obeyed the divine orders and raised the siege. Zeus Ammon's epiphany resulted in sacrifices offered in honour of the god and Lysander's personal pilgrimage to Libya.

In the previous chapter we also encountered Zeus with the cult title of Panamaros or Panamerios being energetically involved in the military affairs of his devotees and actively protecting his temple against its attackers. Zeus Panamaros'

gathered together all the goats they had and they tied torches on both their horns. In the thick darkness of the night the Sikyonians mistook the goats for numberless allies of the Aigeiratai, and refrained from attacking them. The besieged attributed their victorious stratagem to Artemis Agrotera and they built a sanctuary in her honour (*Ἀρτέμιδος Ἀγροτέρας ἐποιήσαντο ἱερόν, τὸ σόφισμα ἐς τοὺς Σικυωνίους οὐκ ἄνευ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδός σφισιν ἐπελθεῖν νομίζοντες*). Apparently, Artemis was taken to have 'illuminated' the mind of the besieged and 'darkened' that of the besiegers. The bright idea of the Aigeiratae had misled the Sikyonians to evaluate the danger erroneously, and effectively resulted in their defeat. The identity of the god at hand became obvious from the special relationship between the goats as sacrificial victim and Artemis Agrotera. The Spartans used to sacrifice a goat before they went into battle. That is why they promised to sacrifice a goat for each of the Persians that would have been killed in the battle of Marathon.

[139] As duly noted by Parke (1967, 220). [140] Paus. 3.18.3. [141] Plut. *Lys.* 20.4–6.

amorphous epiphany in the course of a siege was accounted for in the inscription from Carian Stratonikeia mentioned above.[142] The text, preserved in a fragmentary state, is a civic decree commemorating the divine manifestation of Zeus Panamaros, the Carian sky god par excellence,[143] to the people of the city of Panamara in the battle that took place in 39 BC, when the Parthians under Labienus besieged the city unsuccessfully.[144]

The Panamarians enjoyed a longstanding relationship with the god, who also happened to be an oracular god; in lines 18–20 of our inscription, we read that in the face of the imminent danger the god had repeatedly reassured his protégés via oracles that he took Panamara under his protection, and that no woman or child should leave the place. Following these oracles, and obeying the god's will, they stayed in the village and were kept secure and unharmed by the god (*παρέστησε τὸν δῆμον ϵ]ὐθαρσῆ καὶ ἀκίνδυνον·*). It seems that Zeus Panamaros or Panemerios or Panemeros (as he was also known) had been energetically involved in local politics frequently in the past and managed to preserve the population against many previous foreign invasions (3–4): *ἐπει[δὴ ὁ μέγιστος Ζεὺς Πανάμαρος] | [καὶ πρότερον πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἐπιφανεῖς ἐνήργησεν ἐνεργεία]ς εἰς τὴν τῆς πόλ[ϵ]ως σωτηρίαν ἐκ παλ[αιῶν χρόνων—]*. The battle against the Parthians and the god's participation in it is somehow singled out: 'but in this particular case above all, the god fought against the enemies and revealed his godhead' in line 4 (*[—μ]άλιστα δὲ νῦν, ἠγωνισμένου καὶ πεφηνά[ντος τοῦ θεοῦ τοῖς πολεμίοις,]*). With *πεφηνάντος* we are introduced to the language of epiphany, while *ἠγωνισμένου* conveys the partisan nature of the god's appearance.

The details of this extraordinary alliance between Zeus Panamaros and his devotees bring us even closer to this world of heroic military collision and, to some extent, bridge the chronological gap between the actual time of the battle against the Parthians (39 BC) and that of the legendary Trojan, Persian, and Gallic wars. As we are told in lines 7–8 the god revealed his presence through his powerful thunderbolt, which set the attackers of his temple and much of their military equipment on fire (*ὁ θεὸς μετὰ φω]τὸς φλόγα | πολλὴν [α]ὐτοῖς ἐνετίναξεν*). Book 24 of the *Odyssey* (539) provides a close parallel to the god's intervention on the battlefield through a thunderbolt: *καὶ τότε δὴ Κρονίδης ἀφίει ψολόεντα κεραυνόν*.

[142] *I.Stratonikeia* 10. On Zeus Panamaros' amorphous epiphany see chapter 1.

[143] Cook (1914, vol. I, 17–18): 'How this Zeus "of the Day-light" was conceived by his worshippers can be inferred from representations of him on coins of the Achaean League. A unique silver stater of Aeginetic standard, probably struck at Aigion about 367–62 BC, has for its reverse type an enthroned Zeus, who holds an eagle in his right hand and rests on a sceptre with his left (fig. 1).' The main part of the inscription was found at Panamara. A small part of the text was found at Pisye. More on this in Hula and Szanto 35, no. 3, col. 1 (part); Paton and Myres, *JHS* 16 (1896), 220, no. 13, col. 1 (part); Cousin, *BCH* 28 (1904), 52, ad no. 39 (part); Roussel, BCH 55 (1931), 70–116; Laumonier, *BCH* 61 (1937), 241; *BE* (1968), 506; and *I.Stratonikeia* 10.

[144] Roussel (1931, 76–7) passim. The inscription under question—only one of over four hundred inscriptions related to his cult—was found in the precinct of the god at the end of the nineteenth century, and might have been inscribed on the basis of a statue or a group of statues commemorating the miraculous revelation of the god. For another possible case of statues commemorating the epiphanic revelations of gods see *I.Stratonikeia* 1101 = *LSAM* 69 with commentary. In lines 4–6 of the inscription we read: *καθίδρυται δὲ ἀγάλματα ἐν τῷ σεβαστῷ βουλευτηρίῳ τῶν | προειρημέν^ω[ν θεῶν, ϵναργ]ϵστάτας παρέχοντα τῆς θείας δυνά- | μεως ἀρετάς*· The gods mentioned above are Zeus Panemerios and Hecate, who are *προεστῶτες θεοί* of Stratonikeia, as we read in l. 2 of the same inscription.

The light of the god-sent thunderbolt brightened the night and enabled his devotees to see more clearly through the darkness; it seems that the Parthian army attacked the Panamarians in the night time first, in an attempt to catch them off their guard. This is an element that we have repeatedly met in the epiphanic narratives where Artemis reveals herself in a siege context. The Parthians not only were not disheartened by this most unwelcoming first reception, but they launched a second attack the following morning (lines 9–10). This time they were afflicted by a series of other uncanny meteorological phenomena, such as the deep fog that was mysteriously cast around them in lines 10–11 and the severe storm and the lightning and the thunder that immediately ensued. Those fighting with the god's help were thus enabled to escape the enemies' notice and were greatly benefited by the mutual slaughter of the enemies, which came as a natural consequence of the confusion and the panic that they experienced, as we are told in lines 14–15. Some of the Parthians, we are told, began jumping out of this fog, as if out of a torrent, and seriously injured themselves, while others, as if driven mad by the Furies, threw themselves off the cliffs of the nearby mountains and were either hurt or killed during their withdrawal from the precinct (lines 15–16).

From line 22 onwards, we are told that the Parthian military forces were suddenly reinforced and made a fresh attempt to lay siege to the precinct: *ἐπιφανείσης δὲ τοῖς πολεμίοις τῆς βοηθείας, ἐπισυ<ν>άγοντες | [δύναμιν ἔτι πλείονα ἐκ τοῦ στρατοπέδ]ου τοῦ ὄντος ἐν τοῖς Πισυητικοῖς καὶ παρακελευσάμενοι πάλιν ὥρμησαν ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν*. It is rather noteworthy that the extra help that they received appeared to them as an epiphany! The participle *ἐπιφανείσης* comes as a natural linguistic choice in a passage where the concept of 'epiphany' is most conspicuous, and is mainly used to express this idea of the 'sudden and unexpected'.[145] But this is also in accordance with what we noticed in the introduction to this chapter, namely that *epiphaneia* can also denote a sudden unexpected military attack.

A vivid description of the audiovisual effects that accompanied the amorphous epiphany of the god follows: a) a loud noise was heard as if auxiliaries were coming from the city, though no one appeared (line 24); b) the dogs started barking as if they were attacking the enemy (lines 25–6); c) the lamps within the temple of the god were found burning during the siege (line 27). We remind ourselves here that the combination of barking dogs and supernatural light has been among the *sēmeia* that often accompany epiphanic accounts, such as that of Hecate in the siege of Byzantion (for which see the previous section) and that of Athena in the farmstead of Eumaeus.[146]

The barbarians of Panamara, being punished by the god (*ποινοστροβούμενοι*) for their impiety, threw their weapons away and, unable to find their way back to the camp or take refuge somewhere in the city, fled in disorder (lines 28–9). The participle *poinostroboumenoi* picks up the idea of the divine punishment already expressed earlier at l. 17, where we read that they were driven mad by the Furies and were drawn by them to the nearby mountains, where their bodies were strewn

[145] Cf. Zanker (1981).

[146] *Od.* 16.155ff. On the functions and the significance of light in Greek cult practice see Parisinou (2000).

along the ravines. In other similar accounts of barbarians committing sacrilege against a Greek temple it is the god Pan who sends the divine madness that usually results in a mutual slaughter amongst enemies. This was, for instance, the case with the Gallic attack against Apollo's temple at Delphi: the Gauls, after having experienced a sequence of uncanny phenomena similar to the ones described in our inscription and having suffered serious setbacks at the hands of the Greek army, were afflicted by a panic attack (*Πανικός*).

In order to commemorate the epiphany and the intervention of Zeus Panamaros, the dwellers of the city established the Panamareia festival, an annual festival which included athletic contests and lasted at first for ten days and later on for a whole month. The festival began with a procession from the precinct at Panamara to the city chamber at Stratonikeia and it was mostly known as the *ἐπιδημία τοῦ θεοῦ*, namely the 'Sojourn of the god'.[147]

Synopsis

This chapter thus far has explored epiphanies taking place in the course of a siege and during the actual battle. Chapter 1 laid emphasis on the predominance of amorphous epiphanies and the phenomenon of 'divine bilingualism' in a siege context (i.e. when the deity appears in an easily decipherable form to the members of the community under his/her tutelage, but decides to speak the intercultural language of amorphous epiphanies with the besiegers). In the battle context, however, and with the possible exception of Iliadic epiphanies, heroes and demi-gods seemed to have been more prone to anthropomorphic manifestations, while the presence of major divinities was either inferred by *pars pro toto* or amorphous manifestations. Occasionally, and within a more ritualized context, the divine may be present on the battlefield in an *effigies* form, as were the *effigies* of the Dioscuri, or those of the Aeacidae. But no account of epiphanies in warfare would be complete without examining the narratives which account for 'stratagematic epiphanies', i.e. fabricated epiphanies that take place in the course of a battle or a siege, epiphanies that were orchestrated not by divine but by human agents. For our purposes, stratagems are important to the extent that they may involve the fabricated appearance or even disappearance of certain deities, thus attesting the popularity of the epiphanic schema in crises. As will become clear from the following discussion, these means of alleged divine participation or demonstration of divine *theophilia* are often employed by magistrates, military generals, or priestly personnel (i.e. powerful individuals that affect and often control the behaviour of the community) in situations of extreme danger. Such stratagematic epiphanies are effective precisely because they manipulate people's expectations of steadfast divine assistance and deliverance on the battlefield and in the course of a siege.

[147] More on the topic in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

EPIPHANIC STRATAGEMS OR STRATAGEMATIC EPIPHANIES?

> *τέχνῃ γὰρ κρατοῦμεν, ὧν φύσει νικώμεθα.*
> By cunning contrivance we prevail upon whatever defeats us by nature.
> *Arist.* Mech. Praef. *847a*

The term stratagem is used here in its modern sense, meaning deeds of military and political trickery. Despite the many pejorative connotations the word has nowadays, for the Greeks it had rather positive connotations and was closely associated with inventiveness and creativity. The Greek *stratēgēma* often points to subtle, non-violent means to achieve one's goals, which were quite often superior to direct confrontation.[148] More importantly, in a military or political crisis a *stratēgēma* may prove to be the only advisable course of action, especially if weapons and other traditional means of dealing with a crisis have proven to be failures. In Herodotus the terms most commonly used to express this concept are *sophia*, *technē*, and *mēchanē*, and their variants. These terms denote a capacity for practical knowledge, ingenuity, creativity, and the aptitude to seize the right moment for action. 'Hence a good commander should be *mechanētikos* (inventive, clever) like Themistocles in Herodotus or Xenophon's Spartan Derkylidas.'[149] The concept of trickery in a military context is as old as the Homeric texts, where it most commonly appears in close association with Odysseus, and the so-called Odyssean ethos.[150]

Stratagematic epiphanies are stratagems whose centrepiece becomes the fabricated appearance or disappearance of a deity. Stratagems of this sort were often employed by political and military leaders (often with the cooperation of some members of the priestly personnel) as crisis management tools. Their effectiveness depended heavily on the manipulation of people's expectations of divine intervention and deliverance in critical moments, and on the belief that divine intervention in a moment of crisis was an ample demonstration of divine *theophilia* (that is being favoured by the gods) for the community. Many of these sorts of stratagems feature in Polyaenus' *Strategika*, a second-century collection of brief anecdotes on the ruses of war, which takes much from various ancient sources now lost.[151]

[148] Wheeler (1988, 21), who reminds us that according to Suda, the term *stratēgēma* is equated to success (*katorthōsis*). In Hellenistic times, a new genre manifests itself: collections of military stratagems, such as Polyaenus' collection of brief and simple narratives of military trickery under the title *Stratēgika*, or that of Frontinus called *Stratēgēmata*. The word *στρατήγημα* is formed from the denominative verb *στρατηγέω*, and originally possessed the neutral sense of an act or deed pertaining to a general (*στρατηγός*).

[149] Wheeler (1988, 29).

[150] E.g. *Il.* 7.142, 242–3; *Od.* 1.296; 9.406; Hdt. 1.212; 4.201; Soph. *Trach.* 276ff., with Wheeler (1988, 3).

[151] The manuscript's title is clearly *Stratēgika*, but Polyaenus refers to his narratives as *stratēgēmata* in his introduction. More on the differences and the similarities between the two terms in Wheeler (1988, 2).

Aristomenes on how to stage a Dioscuri epiphany

Polyaenus, for instance, relates how the Messenian hero Aristomenes took advantage of the Lacedaemonians' well-rooted belief in the frequent manifestations of their tutelary gods, the Dioscuri (*οἱ μὲν δὴ Διοσκούρων ἐπιφάνειαν οἰηθέντες*), and thus managed to enter their camp unnoticed and create a bloodbath.[152] The story is told in the wider context of the second Messenian war, and more specifically in the context of the successful resistance posed by the legendary Aristomenes against the on-going Spartan attempts to subject his people to serfdom.[153] He and one of his friends disguised themselves as the Dioscuri by putting *piloi* with golden stars on their heads and by riding pure white horses.[154] Clearly, Aristomenes was exploiting here the popular visual representation of the gods and its imprint on the Spartans' popular imagination. He took advantage of the people's religious belief in their gods partaking in their cultic festivities. The Lacedaemonians, who at the time were celebrating a mass sacrifice (*πάνδημον θυσίαν*), rejoiced at the startling 'epiphany' of the gods in the middle of the night and revelled excessively. The two Messenians dismounted and slaughtered most of the participants.

In Pausanias' account of the pseudo-Dioscuri epiphany the dramatic spatio-temporal context is slightly different: the festival was that of the Dioscuri and the quasi-epiphany of the Messenian heroes took place after the midday meal in the camp of the Lacedaemonians, the latter having already turned themselves to careless revelling.[155] As soon as the Messenians appeared disguised as the Dioscuri, the Spartans prostrated themselves in front of them and started praying to them (*οἱ δὲ ὡς εἶδον, προσεκύνουν τε καὶ εὔχοντο*), in the belief that in front of them stood Castor and Polydeukes who came to attend the sacrifice made in their honour (*ἀφῖχθαι δοκοῦντές σφισιν αὐτοὺς ἐς τὴν θυσίαν τοὺς Διοσκούρους*).

Apparently, Aristomenes had previously encountered the Dioscuri at least twice in his life, the first time being at the battle of Kaprou Sema (*c.*490 BC). It was there that the seer Theoclos forbade him to pass beneath a wild pear tree, because the Dioscuri were seated on it![156] Aristomenes, however, disregarded the soothsayer's words and lost his shield, thus providing the Lacedaemonians with the opportunity to escape the rout. Helen and the Dioscuri manifested themselves as *phasmata* to Aristomenes for a second time, and prevented him from a second attack against the Spartans that would have taken place again during the night (*ἐς μὲν αὐτὴν Σπάρτην ἔξοδον ποιούμενος νύκτωρ ἀπετράπετο ὑπὸ φασμάτων Ἑλένης καὶ Διοσκούρων*).[157] In a word, it was the Dioscuri who had deprived him of his

[152] Polyaen. 2.31.4.

[153] For more information on Aristomenes see the introductory section in Ogden (2004). In his informative monograph on Aristomenes, 'Sparta's nemesis' as he calls him, he emphasizes the role of this local hero in the formation of Messenia's cultural tradition and history.

[154] On the iconographic identity of the Dioscuri as twin riders see chapter 1, '*Pars pro toto* epiphanies: gods in fractions' and Fig. 7.1. See also Platt (forthcoming).

[155] Paus. 4.27.1–3.

[156] Paus. 4.16.5: *ἔνθα δὴ καὶ παρ' ἀχράδα πεφυκυῖάν που τοῦ πεδίου, παρὰ ταύτην Ἀριστομένην οὐκ εἴα παραθεῖν ὁ μάντις Θέοκλος· καθέζεσθαι γὰρ τοὺς Διοσκούρους ἔφασκεν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀχράδι*. See also Ogden (2004, 4, 9–12, 42, 50, 56, and 101–2).

[157] Paus. 1.16.9.

much longed for victory against the Lacedaemonians. One possible reading of Aristomenes' stratagem is that he only staged what he himself was so familiar with. Having experienced the Dioscuri epiphany himself, he staged their quasi-epiphany successfully.

Archidamos' staging of a Dioscuri epiphany

Staging a Dioscuri epiphany to boost morale was apparently a common practice for Spartan military leaders as well, if we are to judge from another Dioscuri quasi-epiphany staged by the Spartan military leader Archidamos at the battle of Dipaia (467 BC).[158] As seen in the previous chapter, the twin gods were often represented as two youths in arms and on horseback. Archidamos took this popular visual representation of the gods into consideration when he created the following tableau vivant in his attempt to raise the spirits of his soldiers: he secretly built an altar and decorated it with gleaming arms. Afterwards he created prints of the horses' hoofs by walking two horses around the altar. The next day the other military leaders and the rest of the Spartan army were delighted to find evidence of an imminent divine alliance: *ἐπεὶ δὲ ἦν ἕως, οἱ λοχαγοὶ καὶ οἱ ταξίαρχοι καινὰ ὅπλα καὶ δυοῖν ἵπποιν ἴχνη καὶ βωμὸν αὐτόματον ἰδόντες διήγγειλαν, ὡς οἱ Διόσκουροι συμμαχήσοντες ἥκοιεν*. The narrative is also included in Frontinus' collections of stratagems.[159] Unlike Aristomenes, who used an enacted epiphany to slaughter the Lacedaemonians, Archidamos made use of a *pars pro toto* epiphany—i.e an epiphany where the divine presence is to be inferred by part of the divine body or a symbol of the divine essence, in this case by the hoof prints of the horses and the gleaming weaponry that are strongly associated with the Dioscuri (see Fig. 7.1). In fact, gleaming weapons were associated with a number of other epiphanic deities, such as Apollo and Herakles. We have already seen how the miraculous appearance of Apollo's sacred weapons in front of the temple of Athena Pronaia at Delphi signified the presence of the god in the battle against the Persians.[160] In the following section we shall examine how Herakles' presence at the battle of Leuctra was also inferred from the miraculous appearance of the god's weapons.

Aristomenes' epiphany and Herakles' *pars pro toto* quasi-epiphany

Aristomenes was not only remembered as a symbol of resistance against the Spartan yoke in the years to come; the impact his presence had on the cultural memory of the Spartans and their enemies was exploited by Epaminondas in an attempt to assist his Theban army in battle against the Spartans at Leuctra (371 BC).[161] In fact, Pausanias' wording implies that Aristomenes came back from the dead (via a necromantic ritual?)[162] to fight on the side of Epaminondas and his men due to his undying hatred towards the Lacedaemonians. Aristomenes was

[158] Polyaenus 1.41.1. [159] Front. 1.11.9. [160] Hdt. 8.36–7.
[161] Paus. 4.32.4–6. [162] See Ogden (2004, 75ff.).

manifestly present at the battle of Leuctra in the form of his shield. Trophonius had advised Epaminondas to establish a *tropaion* and decorate it with the hero's shield. The shield was put on an outstanding landmark, so as to be visible to both the Thebans and their enemies. Aristomenes' *pars pro toto* epiphany had the well-expected equivocal effect that most heroic epiphanies have: the Thebans rejoiced whilst, presumably, its effect on the Spartans was of a more disquieting nature. It is of great importance to note here that no bilingual epiphanies are used in this case, as is often the case with battle and siege epiphanies (see previous two sections), to ensure maximum receivability by the army of both the defenders and the attackers. Aristomenes' shield was apparently an easily recognizable symbol of the hero's presence.

In Diodorus' account of the same battle extra emphasis is laid on the state of *aporia* that Epaminondas and his men found themselves in. *Aporia* denotes here the lack of means of dealing with the situation at hand and along with *amēchaniē/a* is a state of things which most commonly precedes epiphanies that take place in a moment of crisis. It is this state of *aporia* or *amēchaniē/a*, as will also be shown in the next chapter on healing epiphanies, that gives rise to divine epiphanies. The Theban army is said to have been astounded at beholding the great size of the enemy forces (*κατεπλάγησαν ἰδόντες τὸ μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως . . . ἀπορίας δ' οὔσης μεγάλης*).[163] Their general, being thus under extreme pressure, desired to turn the tables on the enemy through his own ingenuity and strategy (*διὰ τῆς ἐπινοίας καὶ στρατηγίας*). Faced with the harsh reality of the lack of genuine divine intervention, Epaminondas devised the following stratagem: he staged the disappearance of the sacred weapons of Herakles presently kept at the Herakleion. Moreover, he spread the rumour that ancient heroes had taken the sacred weapons and were fighting on the side of the Theban army: *ὅτι τὰ κατὰ τὸν νεὼν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ὅπλα παραδόξως ἀφανῆ γέγονε καὶ λόγος ἐν ταῖς Θήβαις διαδέδοται ὡς τῶν ἡρώων τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀνειληφότων αὐτὰ καὶ βοηθεῖν τοῖς Βοιωτοῖς ἀπεληλυθότων*.

The reader is reminded here of Theseus, who helped his beloved Athenians in the battle of Marathon, or of the hero Echetlaeus, who assisted in the same battle, or of Autonoos and Phylacus, who helped the Delphians to defend the god's temple, and of so many other 'heroes with local attachments', as mentioned in the battle epiphanies section of this chapter. There I suggested that divine intervention in military crises was not only welcomed but also steadfastly expected in the course of the battle. Epaminondas' staged epiphany of Herakles and other ancient heroes—who were thought of as picking up Herakles' vanished weaponry and engaging in combat—offers further support for our hypothesis. Epaminondas could not have exploited their religious belief if that belief had not already been ingrained in their religious consciousness.

Epaminondas' decisive stratagematic intervention in the course of Leuctra is underscored in Polyaenus' narrative too.[164] However, here the stratagem is carried out with the consent and the assistance of Herakles' priest and involves not the disappearance of the sacred weapons but their miraculous appearance. The priest and the temple attendants having opened the doors (following the Theban

[163] Diod. Sic. 15.53.1–4. [164] Polyaen. 2.3.8.

general's orders) and having cautiously cleaned and polished the sacred weaponry, left the doors of the temple wide open for the army to see. The next day, we are told, the Theban army was confronted with a wondrous spectacle: the newly polished gleaming weapons of Herakles were strategically placed in front of the statue of the god, thus implying that the god was out there fighting on their side and leading their battle: *εἶδον δὲ καὶ τὰ ὅπλα τὰ παλαιὰ νεόσμηκτα καὶ λάμποντα ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἠλάλαξαν καὶ δαιμονίου θάρσους ἐνεπλήσθησαν ὥσπερ τὸν Ἡρακλέα στρατηγὸν τῆς μάχης ἔχοντες.*

The same miraculous opening of the doors (here of all the temples, not simply that of the Herakleion) and the *aphaneia* of the sacred weapons encouraged the outnumbered Thebans to face their enemies in Xenophon's narrative: *ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Ἡρακλείου καὶ τὰ ὅπλα ἔφασαν ἀφανῆ εἶναι, ὡς τοῦ Ἡρακλέους εἰς τὴν μάχην ἐξωρμημένου.*[165] It is significant that the event is portrayed as a wondrous manifestation of divine will in Xenophon's narrative and *not* as an act of military trickery. Only towards the end do we learn that there were some who viewed the event as a stratagem, attributed this time not to Epaminondas, but vaguely to the Theban military and political leaders.

Themistocles on how to stage Athena's *aphaneia*

It is common to find the same epiphany in the writings of two different authors, portrayed in one as a true divine manifestation, while the other (usually the later) creates it as a contrivance of some authorities or members of the priestly personnel. Such is the case with Athena's disappearance from the Athenian acropolis in the form of her sacred snake: *σημεῖον μὲν λαμβάνων τὸ τοῦ δράκοντος, ὃς ἀφανὴς ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκ τοῦ σηκοῦ δοκεῖ γενέσθαι, καὶ τὰς καθ' ἡμέραν αὐτῷ προτιθεμένας ἀπαρχὰς εὑρίσκοντες ἀψαύστους.*[166] Athena's sacred snake was said to have abandoned the city when Xerxes was dangerously close to Attic soil just before the battle of Salamis. The disappearance of the snake was inferred from the fact that its daily offerings remained untouched. In Plutarch's account the event is presented as one of the many stratagems of Themistocles—who is emphatically said to be *ἀπορῶν*—that was actually carried out with the help of the priests of the temple. Once again the driving force behind Themistocles' exploitation of the popualr belief in epiphanies is *aporia*. Plutarch criticizes the Athenian leader for employing stage machinery appropriate to theatre and for exploiting the people's trust in oracles and divine signs: *ὥσπερ ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ μηχανὴν ἄρας, σημεῖα δαιμόνια καὶ χρησμοὺς ἐπῆγεν αὐτοῖς.*[167]

Perhaps in an attempt to rationalize, Herodotus in his account of the same event presents the episode as a story popular at the time of the evacuation of

[165] Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.7. [166] Plut. *Them.* 10.1–2.

[167] See Frost (1980, 115–16) ad loc.: 'Plutarch's criticism of contrivance in historical or rhetorical writing commonly makes use of this term: *τραγικῶς μηχανὴν ἄραντες, ὦ φίλοι*, against the use of Peripatetic *topoi* (*Qc* 8.4, 724d); *ὥσπερ ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ μηχανὴν αἴρων*, against Lysander's use of oracles (*Lys.* 25. 1); see also the indictment of Herodotus' use of stage machinery in *De.Hdt.mal.* 870c.' Cf. also Plato's criticism in *Cratylus* 425d: *ὥσπερ οἱ τραγῳδοποιοὶ ἐπειδάν τι ἀπορῶσιν ἐπὶ τὰς μηχανὰς καταφεύγουσι θεοὺς αἴροντες.*

Athens in 480 BC.[168] However, he clearly states that the evacuation was not actually caused by the disappearance of the sacred snake; it was simply spurred on by it: 'The disappearance of the snake was just the last straw to the Athenians.'[169] The Athenians allowed themselves to be guided by the oracle and additionally by the *aphaneia* of Athena's sacred snake precisely because they had already decided that abandoning the acropolis was the most advisable course of action: 'When the priestess made that known, the Athenians were readier to leave their city, deeming their goddess to have deserted their acropolis too' (*ὡς καὶ τῆς θεοῦ ἀπολελοιπυίης τὴν ἀκρόπολιν*). It is indeed intriguing that the *aphaneia* of the snake in the public imagination was equated to the *aphaneia* of the goddess herself. Apparently, Athena and her sacred reptile were so inextricably intertwined in the religious consciousness of the people that the vanishing of the latter implied the departure of the former. More importantly, the Athenians allowed themselves to be guided by the authority of a member of the priestly personnel on these matters. It was the priestess of Athena who deciphered the epiphanic semeia (*σημηνάσης δὲ ταῦτα τῆς ἱρηίης*), determined their meaning (perhaps under the guidance of Themistocles?), and informed the public of their significance in determining the fate of their city.

Peisistratus on how to stage Athena's epiphany

Yet the most quoted stratagematic epiphany in a crisis context is that of Phye, who dressed as Athena accompanied Peisistratus on his way back from exile in the 550s.[170] The subject of how the Athenian tyrant managed to persuade the Athenians that his return was made with their tutelary goddess's blessings via Phye's pseudo-epiphany has been extremely popular amongst historians of religion.[171] Those of a positivist/reductionist cast of mind have been quite content to side with Herodotus' scornful remarks on the gullibility of the Athenians.[172] Why would the Athenians of all people believe that a beautiful girl visually assimilated to their tutelary goddess was indeed Athena? How on earth did Peisistratus manage to persuade the Athenians that they were privileged enough to witness a most heroic divine manifestation?

Some eighty years after Peisistratus' return to power the dramatic setting of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* (467 BC)—Thebes besieged by the Argive army—may have brought to mind the analogously orchestrated scene of Phye in Athena's clothes leading the Athenian *tyrannos* back to the city: they watched with eager anticipation as Eteokles sent out a spy to report on the fierce Argive warlords and their leader Polyneikes, who also happened to be his brother. Each of them carried

[168] Hdt. 8.41.

[169] Frost (1980, 116). His view is that Plutarch's passage is a reworking of the Herodotean passage.

[170] This section has benefited from numerous comments and suggestions I received from Jan Bremmer, Jon Hesk, Athena Kavoulaki, Verity Platt, Ian Rutherford, and Paul Scade.

[171] Beloch (1890), Pfister (1924), Rose (1940), Pax (1962), Van Straten (1976), Versnel (1987), Lane Fox (1989), Sinos (1993), and Connor (2000), among others.

[172] On the difference between the movements of religionism and positive reductionism in the history of religion studies see the relevant discussion in the Introduction.

a shield with a motto, or blazon, of great significance for the outcome of the battle and the city's future. Polyneikes' shield was the last to be described: the goddess Dike, fashioned out of gold, was depicted leading the Theban prince back to Thebes.[173] The inscription read: 'I shall lead this man back to his city, and he shall have a country, and shall range in his ancestral chambers (*κατάξω δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε καὶ πόλιν ἕξει πατρῴαν δωμάτων τ' ἐπιστροφάς*).' The Theban spy interpreted the whole scene as a stratagem, a ploy (*τἀξευρήματα*) of those who disputed the authority of the present king.[174] It is most significant that the return of the exiled leader was said to be not simply facilitated, but prompted, by Dike, who is Zeus' daughter and essentially justice personified. But it was even more important that the scene was perceived as a political/military ploy by the Theban scout.

The audience's fathers, or more likely their grandfathers, would have witnessed Peisistratus' return from exile, which had been orchestrated in an analogous way. In Peisistratus' case, of course, it was not Dike but Athena, the most famous of Zeus' daughters, who led the exiled leader back home—or rather, to be precise, a young lady called Phye who looked like the goddess.[175] Interestingly, Peisistratus' return, as narrated in the first book of Herodotus' *Histories* (1.60.2–5), was also embedded in the collective memory of the historian's informants as a cunning scheme, a stratagem the *tyrannos* and his allies used to assist his return to power:[176]

> Megakles then was so worn out because of the faction that he sent a herald to Peisistratus and promised to restore him to power, provided that he would accept his daughter in marriage. Peisistratus agreed to do so, and having come to an agreement with Megakles, the two of them together, in order to lead Peisistratus back to the city, devised a trick, which seems to me the silliest by far (*μηχανῶνται δὴ ἐπὶ τῇ κατόδῳ πρῆγμα εὐηθέστατον*), especially in view of the fact that the Greeks have always been distinguished from the barbarians on account of their cleverness and silliness-free thought; amongst them the Athenians were said to be the most clever of them all; and yet it was at the expense of these Athenians that Megakles and Peisistratus together should devise the following machination (*μηχανῶνται τοιάδε*). In the demos of Paeania there was a woman called Phye, three fingers short of four cubits in stature, and good-looking in all other respects (*μέγαθος ἀπὸ τεσσέρων πήχεων ἀπολείπουσα τρεῖς δακτύλους καὶ ἄλλως εὐειδής*). This woman they fitted in a suit of armour, put her on a chariot, gave her detailed instructions about how to

[173] Aech. *Sept*. 642–9, with Cameron (1970, 95–118) and Hutchinson (1985, ad loc.).

[174] On *ἐξεύρημα* as 'ploy', 'machination', 'inventive scheme', 'stratagem', etc., see Hdt. 1.53, 94, 171; Eur. *IT* 1014, *Hel*. 1103; Ar. *Eccl*. 577; and Plut. *Mor*. 1087d, 1125b.

[175] The girl is called Phye in the majority of our sources: Hdt. 1.60; Cleidemos *FGrHist* 323 F15 (= Athen. *Deipn*. 13.609d Olson, who follows Stiehle in emending the name of the author of the *Nostoi* to Antikleides; cf. *FGrHist* 140 F 6); [Arist.] *Ath. Pol*. 14.4; Polyaen. *Strat*. 1.21.1; Hermogenes *Inv*. 1.3 with Max. Plan. ad loc. (*Rh. Gr*. V 378 Watz); *Epit*. Val. Max. 1.2 ext. 2. The only exception is Schol. *Eq*. 449a 11, where she is called Myrrinē: *Πεισιστράτου γυνὴ γέγονεν ἡ Μυρρίνη, Ἱππίου καὶ Ἱππάρχου μήτηρ. Βυρσίνην οὖν εἶπεν ἀντὶ τοῦ Μυρρίνην, ὡς βυρσοπώλην πάλιν κωμῳδῶν τὸν Κλέωνα. ταύτην ὁ Πεισίστρατος, ὁπότε κατήγαγεν εἰς Ἀθήνας ἐφ' ἅρματος, ἔφασκεν Ἀθηνᾶν εἶναι βουλόμενος τυραννεῖν*.

[176] I have avoided the term tyrant as misleading and anachronistic. I have instead tried to use throughout the Greek *tyrannos* following Anderson (2005, 173–22), who rightly distinguishes between the first *tyrannoi* as conventional, if unusually dominant, style leaders, who flourished in the early Greek oligarchies, and their misrepresentation in Classical and post-Classical sources as cruel illegitimate usurpers.

> make the strongest impression, and, after having sent heralds to precede the procession, drove her into the city. As soon as they arrived at Athens, and following the instructions they had been given, these heralds proclaimed the following: 'Citizens of Athens, receive with pure mind Peisistratus (Ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, δέκεσθε ἀγαθῷ νόῳ Πεισίστρατον), whom Athena herself honours most of all men and leads back to her own citadel (κατάγει ἐς τὴν ἑωυτῆς ἀκρόπολιν).' So the heralds went around and proclaimed those things. It was not long before rumour reached the outlying demes of Athens, that Athena was leading Peisistratus back to the city (Ἀθηναίη Πεισίστρατον κατάγει); those of the city also believed that the woman was indeed the goddess herself, and prayed to that human creature (προσεύχοντο) and received Peisistratus back to their city (ἐδέκοντο).

The Phye procession passage may be the most quoted passage from the first book of the *Histories*. Indeed, the episode has been interpreted variously as a marriage procession between a mortal and an immortal; as a tableau vivant of a mortal–immortal interaction scene with a distinct epic ambiance; as an attempt to exploit, and manipulate politically, the popularity of the iconographic motif of Herakles (perceived as Peisistratus' heroic archetype) performing his toils while being assisted by Athena; as Megakles' attempt to challenge Lykourgos' claims to a privileged relationship with Athena, the city's patron goddess; as an enacted civic ritual by which the Athenians articulated in symbolic terms their acceptance of Peisistratus as leader; and as an advent festival that involves ritual impersonation of a deity.[177] How can we then justify the need to revisit the Phye episode and propose yet again another interpretation, which is almost certainly bound to fail to capture the episode's polysemy?

Let me clear the ground by acknowledging from the start that this section is not in search of yet another ground-breaking theory. Instead, it aims at refocusing an argument that has long been made by scholars of the so-called 'processional view' school and advancing it further by suggesting a new cultic paradigm for Peisistratus' spectacular procession. In particular, I argue along with Connor, Sinos, Kavoulaki, and Hedreen, inter alios, that in order to fully appreciate and understand the Phye episode, we need to emphasize the Athenian audience's response to Peisistratus' performance as active participants in a ritual drama, whose rules

[177] E.g.: marriage procession: Gernet (1981, 344–59) and more recently Munn (2006, 39–42); distinct epic colour: Else (1957, 27–34); heroic imagery as a tool for political manipulation and Herakles as Peisistratus' heroic other: Boardman (1972, 57–72) and (1975, 1–12); Megakles' attempt to challenge Lykourgos' special relationship with Athena: Anderson (2005, 31–4); enacted civic ritual: Connor (2000, 66–8); advent festival that involves ritual impersonation of a deity by a human: Sinos (1993, 83–6) and Connelly (2007, 105–8) inter alios. Of the more recent interpretative attempts those made by Josine Blok and Susan Deacy deserve special mention. Blok (2000, 39–48) has most ingeniously suggested that Phye/Athena acting as Peisistratus' *pompos* (escort/guide) is in fact the visual counterpart of the θείῃ πομπῇ χρεώμενος ('having secured divine guidance'), a phrase which was part of an oracle about the tunnies and the net Peisistratus received prior to the battle of Pellene; whilst the triumphant pageant celebrated Peisistratus' victory at Pellene in imitation of an analogous triumphal Near Eastern or Etruscan procession. The famous oracle (Hdt. 1.62) that the soothsayer Amphilytos gave to the *tyrannos* runs as follows: 'The cast has been thrown, the net is spread out, the tuna fish will dart forwards in the moon light.' Deacy (2007, 232), on the other hand, suggests that in organizing his triumphant return to Athens Peisistratus drew from a variety of successful and well-established cultic paradigms, such the sacred processions in the Panathenaea and the Plynteria, or even the festive *pompae* which escorted the cult statue of the god in the streets of Athens.

they fully comprehend, and follow not out of compulsion, but out of pride and enjoyment in witnessing the epiphany of their patron goddess.[178] Nonetheless, I do argue that revisiting and re-examining the Phye episode as a staged epiphany procession will reveal that there is yet another possible cultic model for the episode as a whole, which has been ignored so far, namely the *anodos* of Athena, the city's poliadic deity celebrated in an annual epiphanic festival called *Pro(s)charisteria* (both variants are attested).[179]

Phye's epiphany procession

The Herodotean narrative does not leave any doubt as to how successful Phye's disguise was: 'those of the city believed that the woman was indeed the goddess herself, and prayed to that human creature and received Peisistratus back to their city'. Although a good deal of ostentatious, even theatrical, eagerness was expected on behalf of the participants, when it came to elaborate festive processions and spectacular civic rituals, many scholars have had serious trouble in conceptualizing the Athenians' reactions.[180]

Phye's name—*Φύη* literally means 'growth', from *φύομαι* (from IE *b^heh_2u-), 'to grow, arise, spring up'—may have sounded in the ears of Herodotus' Athenian informants like what we would call today 'the Body', i.e. the personification of an extraordinary physical beauty and stature, which alludes also to extraordinary human and agricultural fertility.[181] As seen above, beauty and stature (*kallos kai megethos*) could potentially be concomitant *sēmeia* of a divine epiphany, but they could also prepare the ground for confusion, for blurring the boundaries between the human and the divine body.[182]

It is precisely this ambivalence between the body of the god and that of certain humans of special age, physique, and sociopolitical and/or religious status that the processional view school examined in depth and finally established as ingrained in the religious consciousness of the ancient Greeks.[183] As seen in the previous chapter, enacted epiphanies, or else the representational strategy whereby a human being is assimilated to the god as his facsimile and the living embodiment of his power, are attested in both Greek art and cult from Archaic times onwards.[184] This view was further supported by the innovative work of scholars like

[178] Connor (2000), Sinos (1993), Kavoulaki (1999), and Hedreen (2004).

[179] On epiphany processions see chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[180] On the interaction of the political, cultic, and theatrical scene, see Chaniotis (1997), who argues that the pre-Hellenistic political scene is also dispersed with theatricality and discusses the Phye episode as a typical example of that interaction.

[181] See Beekes ad loc. The reader may be reminded of Elle MacPherson's nickname, 'the Body'! MacPherson worked as a model for popular advertising companies in the late 1990s. Her physical beauty was thought of as the epitome of 'the body perfect'.

[182] On which see chapter 1. In [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 14.4 Phye is said to be *μεγάλην καὶ καλήν*. In Polyaen. 8.59 the priestess of Athena who gets mistaken for the goddess herself was also described as *καλλίστη καὶ μεγίστη*. Cf. also *Il.* 18.518, where Athena and Ares are depicted as *καλὼ καὶ μεγάλω* on Achilles' shield.

[183] On the antithesis between divine super-body and human sub-body, see Vernant (1986) and (1989), as well as chapter 1, 'Anthropomorphic epiphany'.

[184] More on enacted epiphanies in chapter 1.

Connelly and Tanner, who showed how, throughout the Greek-speaking world, this blurring of boundaries between the god and his human facsimile is most clearly reflected in the prerequisites for becoming a priest or a priestess of a deity.[185] We have so far mentioned a number of cults in which the members of the priestly personnel were intentionally made to resemble the deity's most popular anthropomorphic image, and enacted the part of the deity on festive occasions.[186]

In Athens, for instance, the priestess of Athena Polias took part in an *agermos* procession after having been visually assimilated to the goddess herself.[187] The ceremonial collection of offerings from the newlyweds, which was the purpose of the *agermos* (ritual begging), followed the *proteleia*, i.e. the day that parents brought their would-be brides to the acropolis and performed sacrifices in honour of its inhabitant goddess. Other ritual occasions involving humans who impersonated deities were reported by Herodotus, Pausanias, Polyaenus, and others: during the festival of an indigenous Libyan virginal deity (identified as Athena by Herodotus), for example, the fairest of the local virgins was assimilated to the deity by putting on a Corinthian helmet and Greek panoply.[188] She then mounted a chariot and was drawn in a ceremonial procession across the Tritonian lake.[189] Likewise, the priestess of Athena in Pellene was not only dressed like the goddess on special ritual occasions, but she was even mistaken for the goddess herself in the course of a military crisis.[190] Polyaenus' text places extra emphasis on the assimilation of the priestess to the goddess, not only with regard to their costumes, but also with regard to their exceptional beauty and stature: *ἡ καλλίστη καὶ μεγίστη τῶν παρθένων*.[191] The priestess who was mistaken for Athena was not simply dressed like the goddess; she was as beautiful and as tall as the virginal goddess herself, or at least as she was thought to be.

In vase paintings and architectural artefacts this close link between the deity and his or her priestly personnel was expressed by portraying the latter as the mortal lookalike of the former. In the sacrificial scene from the black-figure kalpis by the Nikoxenos Painter, for example, Athena is dressed just like her priestess and attends a sacrifice in her honour while seated on a diphros holding a phialē.[192] The helmet in her left hand, the spear that lies next to her, and the large snake crawling on her feet differentiate the divine figure from her mortal facsimile. The goddess Athena reciprocates the sacrificial offer by manifesting herself.

[185] Cf. Tanner (2001) and Connelly (2007).

[186] Connelly (2007, 105–15). For parallels in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Rome see Versnel (1970, esp. 84–93, 203–35). For iconographical parallels of the visual assimilation of the deity and the cult statue, see Van Straten (1995, figs 4, 13, and 111).

[187] Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon* <*Αἰγίς*>. *ἦν Λίβυες φοροῦσι δορὰν, καὶ τὸ ἐκ στεμμάτων πλέγμα, καὶ τὸ διὰ στεμμάτων πεπλεγμένον δίκτυον. οὕτως Λυκοῦργος· καὶ Ἡρόδοτος· ἡ δὲ ἱέρεια Ἀθήνῃσι, τὴν ἱερὰν αἰγίδα φέρουσα, τοὺς νεογάμους εἰσήρχετο. κτλ*. Cf. also Suda, s.v. <*Αἰγίς*>. More on this in Connelly (2007, 106, n. 101); on *agermos* see Burkert (1985, 101–2).

[188] On Herodotus and Greek religion in general, see Harrison (2000) and Scullion (2006, 192–208).

[189] Hdt. 4.180.

[190] When the city was besieged by the Aitolians: Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.59. Cf. also Pritchett (1979, 35).

[191] Polyaen. 8.59.

[192] Kroll (1982, fig. 11a) and Shapiro (1989b, fig. 10c). The vase is presently lost but it is known to us from a drawing. Cf. also fig. 6.4.

To illustrate the durability and the popularity of the enacted epiphanies through time Connor and Sinos remind us of Anthia and Callirhoe, the heroines of Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* and Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* respectively.[193] Anthia and Callirhoe were said to have been worshipped as the human duplicates of Artemis and Aphrodite on a large number of festive occasions.[194] As discussed in chapter 1, it was the girls' beauty and youth, two paramount hallmarks of divinity, which linked them with the goddesses in the first place; but it was the spectators' familiarity with ritual impersonation on festive occasions, such as that of a sacred procession, that allowed both heroines to become the object of ritual προσκύνησις and to inspire awe (ἐθαύμαζον) on more than one occasion.[195] More significantly, according to the author of the Athenian Constitution, viewing Phye, in her Athena-like attire, leading the chariot procession that brought Peisistratus back to Athens had the very same impact on its contemporary spectators:

> On the twelfth year after this [i.e. the first period of Peisistratus' reign], Megakles, worn out because of the faction, and having sent heralds to come to an agreement with Peisistratus, on terms of receiving his daughter in marriage, led him back to the city in an antiquated and extremely simple manner (ἀρχαίως καὶ λίαν ἁπλῶς): for after having spread the rumour that Athena was leading Peisistratus back to the city, and having found a tall and beautiful woman (according to Herodotus a member of the demos of Paeania, but according to some others a Thracian flower girl from Kollytos named Phye), he dressed her up to imitate the goddess's external appearance, and brought her to the city with Peisistratus, who on his part entered the city on a chariot with the woman standing at his side, while the people in the city were filled with awe (θαυμάζοντες) and performed ritual *proskynēsis* (προσκυνοῦντες).[196]

I have left the term *proskynēsis* intentionally untranslated, since its semantic content—especially whether the gesture implied kneeling or not—has been a matter of debate. It is clear, however, that for the Greeks the gesture belongs to the realm of divine honours, honours paid to the gods (θεῖαι τιμαί), and was often associated with humans who were treated as the living embodiment of the divine.[197] Being filled with awe is yet another typical reaction to divine epiphanies:

[193] Connor (2000, 63–4); Sinos (1993, 83–4). Cf. also Dickie (2004, 165–73), who supplies more examples of mortals mistaken for gods and provides an informative discussion of *proskynēsis* as a concomitant *semeion* of epiphany.

[194] Anthia: Xen. *Ephes*. 1.2.2–7, 1.12.1. Callirhoe: Char. *Chaer & Call*. 1.1.16, 1.14.1–2, 2.2.6, 2.3.5–6. It is important that neither Anthia nor Callirhoe are said to have been priestesses of the goddesses they ritually impersonated.

[195] Esp. for Callirhoe; see Char. *Chaer & Call* 1.1.16; 2.3.9; 3.2.14, etc. In Xen. *Ephes*. 1.2.5–7 Anthia is made to look like Artemis while leading a sacred procession. More in Connelly (2007, 85). The same scholar reminds us of Charikleia, the heroine of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, who is said to have resembled Artemis in her virginity, youth, and beauty. Charikleia was also visually assimilated to the goddess, while leading the great procession, which was the centrepiece of the great festival in her honour. On the gods and goddesses of the Greek novel, see Dowden (2010).

[196] [Arist.] *AP* 14.4.

[197] Van Straten (1974, 159–89). Cf. also Arrian, *Anabasis* 4.12.3–4; Plut. *Alex*. 54; *FGrHist* 125, fr. 14 with Rhodes (1981, ad *AP* 14.4). The verb *thaumazō*, which is part of the epiphanic vocabulary, is twice associated with tyranny in Herodotus: in 3.82, where Darius, who speaks in favour of monarchy as the ideal form of political organization, explains how the monarch rises to be champion of the people's cause: 'therefore, he is admired by the people (θωμάζεται . . . ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου), and by being admired manifests himself as the people's monarch (θωμαζόμενος δὲ ἀν' ὧν ἐφάνη μούναρχος [ἐών]);

thaumazein, along with *thambos*, *taphos*, *thauma idesthai*, etc., belongs to the vocabulary of wonder, i.e. a word group that 'describes this experience which partakes not only of brilliant sight but also of gripping wonder at appearance'.[198] In Herodotus' description of the audience's reaction, we are told that they were persuaded that Phye was the goddess herself and offered prayers to her (*proseuchonto*). Regardless of whether the Athenians were simply filled with awe in front of the girl who enacted the part of the goddess and prayed to her, or went one step further and prostrated themselves in front of her, what is of importance here is that they perceived her as the human facsimile of their patron goddess, and reacted as if they were confronted by Athena herself.[199] More importantly, they offered ritual reception to Peisistratus (*edechonto*) and welcomed him back in the city.

Did the Athenians know Phye's true identity, or did they really think of her as the embodiment of their poliadic goddess? In all likelihood, this is not an either/or question. Our discussion so far has firmly established that the Athenians, like the rest of the Greeks, would have been culturally preconditioned to accept the double ontological status of the girl as both a *real* goodess and a *real* young woman, at least for the duration of the sacred procession. Phye would have been elevated to the status of a goddess by both the sacred context of the *pompē* and the expectations of its participants. Modern anthropological parallels for twofold identities as both divine and human for limited periods of time can be found in the Hindu religious traditions of Kumari or Kumari Devi, where prepubescent girls are worshipped as the living embodiment of the divine female energy or devi for a limited period of their lives.[200] On the annual Indra Jatra festival, the living goddess is borne in a palanquin in a religious procession through the streets of the Nepalese capital Kathmandu. Thousands of people come to see the living goddess and seek her blessings. During the same festival, the Kumari also blesses the king of Nepal.

and in 5.12, where another stratagem involving a tall and beautiful lady and her brothers' desire to become *tyrannos* is described. On *theiai timai* see Strauss-Clay (1989).

[198] Prier (1989, 68–108). On the epiphanic overtones in these terms see also Pfister (1924, 317); Strauss-Clay (1983, 167); Aubriot (1989, 249–60); and Buxton (2009, 164–8).

[199] On Athena's popular statuary representations in Peisistratus' time, in general, Shapiro (1989b, esp. 24–7) is a good starting point. The Promachos type is an obvious choice: a) it was often represented in the Panathenaic amphorae, b) it was a favourite type of offering by the end of the sixth century, c) it is a very prolific type in different media, which in all likelihood drew from a major statue of large scale. Burkert (1985, 187), on the other hand, thinks that Phye's costume was modelled on the Palladion-type statue of Athena. It is difficult, however, to connect visually the Palladion, which was a pretty rudimentary representation of the bodily physiognomy of the goddess (as *xoana* usually are) with the rather dramatic naturalism of a human impersonating the goddess. Polyaenus (1.21.1), on the other hand, has it that Phye was visually assimilated to Athena Polias.

[200] More on this anthropological parallel in Koch-Piettre (forthcoming). The word Kumari derives from Sanskrit *Kaumarya* meaning 'virgin'. The same term is a cult title of the goddess Durga as a child. The girl's menarche signifies the end of this privileged dual status and her return to ordinary human life, which often coincides with serious psychological and sociopolitical difficulties for both the Kumari and her family. On the role and the meaning of Devi in Nepalese religion, see van Kooij (1997, 16–18).

Cultic paradigms for Peisistratus' *kathodos*

The element of processional performance in the Phye episode has been repeatedly discussed by several scholars of the processional school.[201] Different readings emphasize different aspects of the Phye *pompē*. Sinos, for instance, looks at the episode as an epiphany procession, which aimed at elevating its participants to a level superior to that of the humans. The same author rightly emphasizes the use of the chariot both in art and cult, and concludes that these ceremonial devices connect the human activity presented—whether fighting in a battle, participating in a wedding, or in an athletic contest—to its mythic paradigm. In this view, chariots, when used in iconography or ritual, aim at making humans beings appear more godlike, and this is precisely why Peisistratus made the chariot procession the centrepiece of his ceremonial entry to Athens.[202]

Connor, however, was the first to underline the pre-eminence of processional performance in the articulation of sociopolitical and religious power structures in general and in Archaic politics in particular.[203] Having been influenced by scholarly developments in socio-anthropology, and with the processional rites of Renaissance Venice in mind, Connor understood the Phye procession as a meaningful negotiation of power dynamics between the people and their leader, as a two-directional communication, and effectively as an expression of mutual consent in the form of a civic ritual. Like Sinos, Connor laid emphasis on the importance of the chariot as a status marker in festive processions and read the reference to Phye/Athena as Peisistratus' divine *paraibatēs* as an allusion to the recently revived and reorganized Panathenaic procession.[204]

Paraibatēs (masc.) and *paraibatis* (fem.) mean literally 'the one who stands beside', that is the warrior who stands next to the charioteer.[205] Some festive processions, like the Eleusinia and the Panathenaea, included contests of *apobatai* and *parabatai*, namely of individuals who in full armour used to leap in and out of

[201] Cf. (e.g.) Bömer (1952, no. 342), Versnel (1970, 70, 86), Connor (1987, 59–68), Robertson (1992, xiv), Sinos (1993, 75–84), Parker (1996, 83–4), Graf (1996, 55), Kavoulaki (1999, 317–18), Blok (2000, 39–48), Hedreen (2004, 47–8), and Forsdyke (2006, 224–41).

[202] Sinos (1993, 75–8); Deacy (2007) and *eadem* (2008, 99–102).

[203] Connor (2000, 56–75).

[204] To support this view, he uses the testimony of Dionysius of Hallicarnassus, who thinks that *apobatēs* is the Attic equivalent of *parabatēs* (*Antiq. Rom.* 7.73.3): οὓς οἱ ποιηταὶ μὲν παραβάτας, Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ καλοῦσιν ἀποβάτας. Contra Boardman (1989, 159), who thinks that turning 'an Athena *parabates* into an *apobates* is too much'. On the remodelling of the Panathenaea by Peisistratus in the second quarter of the sixth century, see Parker (1996, 89–91), with primary sources and secondary bibliography. For a refreshing re-evaluation of what traditionally has been referred to as 'Peisistratus' cultural politics', see Blok (2000, 17–38). The secondary bibliography on the Panathenaic procession is vast. E.g.: Deubner (1932, 2–35); Parke (1977, 33–50); Simon (1983, 55–72); Neils (1996); Graf (1996, 58–9); Parker (1996, 68, 75–6, 89–92); Sourvinou-Inwood (1994, 271–4); Kavoulaki (1999, 299–306); Parker (2005, 253–69).

[205] Cf. for instance *IG* I^2.5, *Il.* 5.365, 23.132, Eur. *Suppl.* 677, Xen. *Cyr.* 7.1.20, Strab. 15.1.52, Ael. *VH* 4.18.4, Hesych. s.v. παρα(ι)βάται etc. Sandys (1912, ad loc.) speaks of *paraibatousēs* as a 'noteworthy Ionism, but not derived from the account in Hdt.'. Perhaps the closest parallel to Phye and Peisistratus riding together can be found in Apoll. Rhod. 1.754–6 and Schol. Pind. *O.* 1.122b.7, where Hippodameia is the *paraibatis* and Pelops the charioteer on one of the two racing chariots woven into the purple mantle that Athena herself has made.

the ceremonial chariots.[206] The term features in both of our fourth-century sources of the episode (i.e. Cleidemus' eighth book of *Nostoi*, and the Aristotelian *Athenian Constitution*).[207] However, since *paraibatēs* does not appear in Herodotus, the earliest of our sources, the possibility that Phye, visually assimilated to Athena, was instructed to jump in and out of the chariot throughout the procession seems fairly remote.

Hedreen, on the other hand, attempts to draw parallels between the Phye *pompē* and the Dionysiac epiphany processions, such as the ship cart epiphany procession of the Anthesteria, or the εἰσαγωγή ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσχάρας ('the escorting in from the hearth') of the cult statue of the god from his temple in the academy back to the city centre.[208] Peisistratus himself is often discussed amongst the long line of Hellenistic and early Imperial monarchs, who likened themselves, both visually and conceptually, to Dionysus while entering the gates of their cities, and has therefore been regarded as some sort of proto-*triumphator*.[209] On this interpretation, Peisistratus' entrance into the city in a jovial *pompē* is comparable to, let us say, Alexander entering Gedrosia accompanied by his entire army in a quasi-Dionysiac *thriambos* procession;[210] Demetrius' remarkably extravagant entrance to Athens in the spring of 307 BC;[211] Attalos' triumphal entrance to Athens in 201 BC;[212] or Mark Antony's entering Ephesus in 41 BC amidst women dressed as Bacchants and boys as satyrs and pans in a procession which abounded in pipes, flutes, *thyrsoi*, ivy branches, and other Dionysiac insignia and paraphernalia.[213] The two structurally integral elements of these triumphal entries were a) the entry of the ruler through the city gates, who was met by the citizenry, and escorted in a jovial procession, often accompanied by hymns and acclamation, to the city's special local deity's dwelling; and b) the offering of sacrifices to this deity.[214] The arrival of the victorious ruler signifies the beginning of a new era for the community. These triumphal entrances of the Hellenistic and early Imperial monarchs may have been partly modelled on the epiphany processions of the Archaic and Classical Greek-speaking world.

[206] Connor (2000, 66, n. 33) with bibliography. Cf. also Parker (1996, 90).

[207] Cleidemus *FGrHist* 323 F15 = Athen. Deipn. 13.609d Olson (who follows Stiehle in emending the name of the author of the *Nostoi* to Antikleides; cf. *FGrHist* 140 F 6). Cf. also [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 14.4: καὶ ὁ μὲν Πεισίστρατος ἐφ' ἅρματος εἰσήλαυνε, παραιβατούσης τῆς γυναικός, οἱ δ' ἐν τῷ ἄστει προσκυνοῦντες ἐδέχοντο θαυμάζοντες.

[208] The ritual *eisagōgē* was part of the preliminary ritual of the City Dionysia. Whether the ship cart procession belonged to the City Dionysia or the Anthesteria is still a matter of debate. More on this in Hedreen (2004, 45–6) and Graf (1992, 59), with bibliography. Sourvinou-Inwood (1994, 269–90) has an informative discussion of the εἰσαγωγή ἀπὸ τῆς ἐσχάρας rite and its ritual signification. On Dionysiac θρίαμβος and Dionysiac processions as epiphany processions, see Versnel (1970, 1–38).

[209] Versnel (1970, 70, 86), however, in his standard treatise on the Graeco-Roman triumph, refrains from drawing direct parallels between the Archaic *tyrannos* and the entrance processions of the rulers of the Graeco-Roman world.

[210] Arrian *Anab.* 6.28; Plut. *Alex.* 67. 2–4.

[211] Plut. *Dem.* 9.1 and 13.1; Athen. *Deipn.* 6.253b–254b Olson.

[212] Polyb. 16.25.5–8.

[213] Plut. *Ant.* 24.3–4; Vell. Pat. 2.84.4; Dio Cass. 50.5.3. Cf. also Duff (1992, 55–71), who maintains that Jesus's entry into Jerusalem, as reported by Mark (11.1–10), has been modelled on Graeco-Roman triumphal processions of this sort.

[214] Nussbaum (1976, 966); Versnel (1970, 386).

Despite the conservative nature of civic ritual repertoire in general, and the rightly assumed resilience of successful ritual schemata (such as that of the epiphany processions) in particular, it is no doubt difficult to draw and substantiate parallels between the Phye episode as described by Herodotus and the aforementioned festive processions precisely because of their late date. To add to the problem of lateness, Dionysus, the main epiphanic protagonist of the proposed parallel ritual occasions mentioned above, does not feature in the Phye *pompē* in any possible form. Nor are we told that Peisistratus was dressed in the guise of this god, or, as a matter of fact, in the likeness of any other god or hero, as Boardman and others who followed him have assumed.[215] Furthermore, as Blok very pertinently maintains, none of the ritual parallels proposed so far seems to have included an epiphany procession, which entailed 'the change of a political *persona non grata* into a popular leader, to be invested moreover with power for many years to come (if we stick to the traditional chronology) by means of this religious practice'.[216]

Deacy is certainly on the right path when she suggests that Peisistratus and his allies orchestrated his triumphant return to Athens whilst drawing from a variety of successful and familiar cultic paradigms, such as the sacred processions in the Panathenaea and the Plynteria.[217] The ritual grammar of the chariot procession had to be immediately recognizable in order to be fully understood by its spectators. Moreover, it had something to do with Athena. Hedreen's processional examples do not feature Athena, the only divine character who was said to have partaken in the procession. And this is precisely where the greatest difficulty lies: Athena, unlike Dionysus and Kore, does not seem to have a festive occasion on which the goddess was said to be 'coming up' or 'leaving away'. In other words, Athena does not have an *anodos* or *kathodos* festival, which could indeed provide the ritual prototype for the Phye procession. Or does she?[218]

Pro(s)charisteria and Pro(s)chaireteria

A springtime epiphany festival was said to have been celebrated in Athens in honour of Athena. The *anodos* of Athena as a vegetation goddess was celebrated in a festival of great antiquity called Pro(s)charesteria (both variants are attested). Pro(s)charisteria along with the similarly sounding Pro(s)chaireteria festival—at times the two seem to have been confused—are attested by a number of Byzantine *lexica*:

> 1) Suda π 2928 s.v. *Προχαριστήρια· ἡμέρα ἐν ᾗ οἱ ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ πάντες ἀρχομένων καρπῶν φύεσθαι, λήγοντος ἤδη τοῦ χειμῶνος, ἔθυον τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ· τῇ δὲ θυσίᾳ ὄνομα Προχαριστήρια. Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἱερωσύνης· τὴν τοίνυν ἀρχαιοτάτην θυσίαν διὰ τὴν ἄνοδον τῆς θεοῦ, ὀνομασθεῖσαν δὲ Προχαριστήρια, διὰ τὴν βλάστησιν τῶν καρπῶν τῶν φυομένων*. (ed. Adler Leipzig 1933 = Conomis VII 1a)

[215] On problems with the theory, see Parker (1996, 85). A full review of the so-called 'Boardman treatment' can be found in Brandt (1997, 315–43).

[216] Blok (2000, 18).

[217] Deacy (2007, 232). Cf. also *eadem* (2008, 99).

[218] Bömer (1952): 'Es handlet sich nicht um ein Athenafest, da Athena in Athen an ihren Festen nicht in Personal auftritt, sondern um eine inszenierte Epiphanie.'

Procharisteria is the day on which all the office holders used to offer sacrifices to Athena when (because of) the crops began to grow and the winter was already ending. The name of these sacrifices (festival) was Procharisteria. Lykourgos in his work entitled *On the Priesthood* writes: 'so the most ancient sacrifice is held because the goddess is coming up, and it is named Procharisteria because of the sprouting of the growing crops'.[219]

2) Lexica Segueriana. Glossae Rhetoricae (e cod. Coislin. 345) p. 295.3 s.v. *Προσχαριστήρια· ἡ μυστικὴ θυσία τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ὑπὲρ τῶν φυομένων καρπῶν* (ed. Nauck Berlin 1814) = *Anecd.* Bekker 1.295.3

Proscharisteria is the mysteric festival of Athena for the sake (for the benefit) of the growing crops.

3) Suda p. 2852 s.v. *Προσχαιρητήρια· ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις γραφομένη, ὅτε δοκεῖ ἀπιέναι ἡ Κόρη.* (ed. Adler Leipzig 1933)

Proschaireteria is a festival celebrated by the Athenians, when they think that Kore leaves.

4a) Harpocration *π* 114 s.v. *Προχαιρητήρια· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῇ Κροκωνιδῶν διαδικασίᾳ. ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις γραφομένη ὅτε δοκεῖ ἀπιέναι* (Valesius *ἀνιέναι*) *ἡ Κόρη* (ed. Bekker Berlin 1833 = Conomis VII 1b)

Prochaireteria: Lykourgos in his speech on the public examination (*diadikasia*) moved by the Krokonidai genos says: 'a festival attested amongst the Athenians, when they think that the Kore is leaving'.

4b) Harpocration *π* 114 s.v. *Προσχαιρητήρια* (*προχαιρητήρια* C)*· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῇ κροκωνιδῶν διαδικασίᾳ. ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις ἀγομένη ὅτε δοκεῖ ἀνιέναι ἡ Κόρη.* (ed. Dindorf, Oxford 1853)

Proschaireteria (C has the alternative spelling *prochairētēria*): Lykourgos in his speech on the public examination (*diadikasia*) moved by the Krokōnidai genos says: 'it is a festival led by the Athenians when they think that the Kore is coming up'.

4c) Harpocration *π* 114 s.v. *Προσχαιρητήρια· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῇ Κροκωνιδῶν διαδικασίᾳ. ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις ἀγομένη ὅτε δοκεῖ ἀπιέναι ἡ Κόρη.* (Keaney, Amsterdam 1991)

Proschaireteria: Lykourgos in his speech on the public examination (*diadikasia*) moved by the Krokōnidai genos says: 'it is a festival led by the Athenians when they think that the Kore is leaving'.

5a) Photios, *Lexicon* s.v. *Προσχαιρητήρια ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναῖοις γραφομένη, ὅτε δοκεῖ ἀπιέναι ἡ κόρη.* (ed. Porson, Cambridge 1822)

Proschaireteria is a festival attested by the Athenians, when they think that the daughter is leaving.

5b) Photios, *Lexicon π* 1388 s.v. *Προσχαιρητήρια· ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις †γραφομένη†, ὅτε δοκεῖ ἀπιέναι ἡ Κόρη.* (Theodoridis, Berlin, Boston 2013)[220]

Proschairētēria is a festival attested by the Athenians, when they think that Kore is leaving.

A quick look at the lexicographical *lemmata* quoted above makes two things immediately obvious: to begin with, rather than one we may actually have to do with two separate festivals of agrarian character. The first two entries (nos 1 and 2)

[219] Cf. also Lykourgos 7, fr. Ia–b Conomis (ed.); *Anecd.* Bekker (ed.) I,295,3 with Deubner (1932, 17), Bérard (1974, 24), and Parker (1996, 302–4).

[220] Christos Theodoridis (ed.), *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon. Volumen III, N–Φ.* Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2013. The lemma in Photios' *Συναγωγή Λέξεων* is directly dependent on Harpocration's *Epitome*. See Theodoridis ad loc.

attest festivals in honour of Athena called Pro(s)charisteria; while the rest (nos 3, 4, and 5) attest a different festival in honour of Kore named Pro(s)chaereteria. Although the two festivals are etymologically related they do not mean the same thing: the festival of Pro(s)charisteria derives from the old substantive *χάρις*, *-ιτος* ('grace, beauty, delight, gratefulness, thanks', which is independent of the verb *χαίρω* ('to salute, to be of good cheer, to desire, to enjoy').[221] It is the second festival, called Pro(s)chaereteria, which derives from *χαίρω*. The Suda lexicon, in particular, has two different entries for these two different festivals: *π* 2928 for *Προχαριστήρια* and *π* 2852 for *Προσχαιρητήρια* (nos 1 and 3 respectively).[222] Secondly, the difficulty of navigating through Byzantine lexicographers and relying on their testimonies is exacerbated by the complex patterns of interdependency between these lexica and, above all, the liberal, if not interventionist, editorial attitudes of their early editors.[223] The fluctuating name of the festival aside, some entries use the participle *grafomenē* to qualify *heortē*, and others *agomenē*, and where some give *anienai* ('to come up', 'to appear') to describe the celebrated divine action in question, others have *apienai* ('to go', 'to disappear').[224]

Having said that, it is hard to ignore that at least two separate sources (nos 1 and 2) speak plainly enough of a springtime *anodos*, i.e. a 'coming up' festival celebrated in Athens in honour of Athena. Essentially, they both give the same name for the festival, which is Pro(s)charisteria, meaning a thanksgiving sacrifice that was offered either before ('*pro-*') the expected event or in addition to ('*pros-*'). More importantly, in either case the much anticipated event is said to have been the growth of the crops: *ὑπὲρ τῶν φυομένων καρπῶν* (Segueriana Lexica); *διὰ τὴν βλάστησιν τῶν καρπῶν τῶν φυομένων* (Suda). The reader is instantly reminded of *Φύη*, the tall beautiful girl whom Peisistratus employed to lead his *kathodos* procession. Her name may well have been reminiscent of this resounding appeal for vegetative growth, at least in the ears of the procession's original audience. The girl's connection with vegetation is all the more prominent in both the Athenaeus passage (which preserves the fragment from Cleidemus' *Nostoi*) and the excerpt from the Aristoteleian *Athenian Constitution*, where in addition to Phye's name, we get the information that she was a professional seller of flowers and garlands (*stephanopōlis*).[225] Why would there be so much emphasis on the name and the identity of the mortal who played the role of an immortal—we have no comparable cases from other enacted epiphanies either in cult or in crisis—if it was not significant? Could we also read here a hint that Peisistratus' *kathodos* was in fact modelled on Athena's

[221] Beekes s.v. *χαίρω* from IE **ǵher(H)-* 'desire, enjoy'.

[222] Cf. Dindorf ad loc.; Deubner (*Attische Feste*, 17).

[223] Dickey (2007, 87–106) offers a valuable guide for effective use of these lexica and brief introductions on the content of each of them. Cunningham (2003) in his introduction provides a good introduction on the relationship of these lexica with the ancient sources and the ways they draw information from each other and their lost archetype *Σ*. I have followed Dickey's advice in looking at different editions of these Byzantine lexica, including the latest ones where that was available.

[224] Cf. Dindorf ad loc.; Conomis *ad* fr. 7. I a–b.

[225] Cleidemus *FGrHist* 323 F15 = Athen. *Deipn.* 13.609d Olson (who follows Stiehle in emending the name of the author of the *Nostoi* to Antikleides; cf. *FGrHist* 140 F 6): *στεφανόπωλις δὲ ἦν*; [Arist]. *Ath. Pol.* 14.4: *ὡς δ' ἔνιοι λέγουσιν ἐκ τοῦ Κολλυτοῦ στεφανόπωλιν Θρᾷτταν.*

anodos festival, which culminated in sacrificial offerings in favour of the growing crops (*ὑπὲρ τῶν φυομένων καρπῶν*)? And if so, in what ways could the ritual grammar of Athena's festival fit the needs of Peisistratus' homecoming? This is a particularly difficult question to which I shall return in due course.

Suda's entry (no. 1: *π* 2928) deserves a special mention as it provides the most concrete and comprehensive information on the *anodos* festival. Apparently, Procharisteria, the festival that celebrated the *anodos* of Athena, was of great antiquity (*ἀρχαιοτάτην θυσίαν*) and prestige, for it was attended by all the Athenian office holders (*οἱ ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ πάντες*). The Athenian magistrates offered sacrifices to Athena as a thanks offering in advance to propitiate the goddess, who was somehow linked with vegetation.[226] This piece of information clearly ties in well with how the author of the *Athenian Constitution* characterizes the Phye procession: *κατήγαγεν αὐτὸν ἀρχαίως καὶ λίαν ἁπλῶς*. The ritual procession that Peisistratus and his allies modelled their histrionic procession on must have been of significant antiquity and of great popularity to be effortlessly understood and appreciated by its spectators. The Pro(s)charisteria festival fits this description perfectly.

The time of the festival is indicated as sometime between the end of the winter and the beginning of spring. The Suda concludes its entry by quoting verbatim its source and by giving a fragment from Lykourgos' speech entitled *On the Priesthood*. Lykourgos, the fourth-century orator of the Eteoboutadae genos, who was an expert on religious matters and possibly even a priest at the Erechtheion, writes: 'so the most ancient sacrifice is held because the goddess is coming up and it is named Procharisteria because the growing crops are sprouting'.[227] Unfortunately, we do not have any exact information as to what time of year the Phye procession took place. Ancient historians disagree even as to whether it took place before or after the tyrannos' self-exile to Eretria, and modern historians have challenged the historicity of the episode as a whole. Nonetheless, one may safely assume that if the procession did indeed take place—and, I think, it must have have done so to leave so deep and elaborate a cultural memory behind—then it may as well have taken place at a time of the year where such a spectacular display would not go amiss due to adverse weather conditions.[228]

Moving on to the particularly difficult issue now, Athena's connection with agrarian fertility, although somewhat surprising for us modern students of ancient religious beliefs and practices, would not have been nearly as astonishing for the

[226] Other examples of offerings in advance include the *protrygaia* and the *proērosia*.

[227] Lycourg. Fr. 7, 1a–b Conomis; *Anecd.* Bekker I, 295,3 with Deubner (1960, 17), Bérard (1974, 24), and Parker (1996, 302–4). This is the same sacred genos from which the priestess of Athena Polias came from. On Lykourgos' keen interest in religion and his expertise on religious matters: Parker (1996, 242–55); [Plut.] Mor. 847d; Frs. VI, 1–22 (from his speech *On the Priestess*); frs VII, 1–6 (from his speech *On the Priesthood*); Fr. XIII, 1 (from his work *On the Oracles*). All the references are to the Conomis edition with his detailed notes (1969) ad loc. Other epigraphical sources (*IG* II^2 1672 and 334) present him as actively involved in the rebuilding of the sanctuary of the Eleusinia *Mystēria* and the reformation of the Lesser Panathenaea. More on this issue in Conomis (1969, 74), Mikalson (1998, 11–45), and Worthington et. al. (2001, 157–8).

[228] Exiles of Peisistratus and dates: Adcock (1924) and Lavelle 1991); Peisistratus and dates of the establishment of the Great Panathenaea: Figueira (1984).

contemporary Athenians. After all, Athena was the city's tutelary deity, and as such she had her share in every sphere of action that was significant for the welfare of the community: political and economic administration, warfare, technological advances, even agriculture.[229] In all likelihood, Athena's connection with vegetation predated the arrival of Demeter from Eleusis to Athens and was closely linked with Athena's general civic duties and her role as the patron goddess of the city. Her mythical and ritual links to fertility and vegetation, however, were still recognizable in Classical times and beyond in rites like those of the Epimenia (*ἐπιμήνια*) offerings to the sacred snake of the acropolis, the Arrephoria (*ἀρρηφόρια*) or Ersephoria (*ἐρσηφόρια* or *ἑρρηφόρια*), her mythical connection with the reptilian foster son Erichthonios ('the most chthonic one'), the Athenian king Erechtheus (often represented as half man, half snake), Cecrops and his daughters Aglauros, Erse, Pandrosos. The fact that the names of all three girls are associated with fertility and vegetation and that two of them enjoyed cultic honours on the slope of the acropolis along with Athena herself hardly needs pointing out.[230]

But this is where the tantalizing entry of *Lexica Segueriana* (no. 2) comes in and pushes things even further: it is said here that Athena not only had a festival in her role as a vegetation-related goddess (*ὑπὲρ τῶν φυομένων καρπῶν*), but also that there was a mysteric aspect to that festival (*ἡ μυστικὴ θυσία τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς*)—a segment of the celebration that took place away from the prying eyes of the public in the presence of the few privileged ones who had secured access to it (via initiation, sex segregation, or perhaps by belonging to the right sacred genos?).[231] Are we then to suppose that this mysteric segment complemented the public one, the one attended by all the Athenian officials? And are there any other myths and cultic occasions in which Athena is even remotely related to mystic rites and rituals? More importantly, how could we legitimately speak of mysteric sacrifices in honour of an 'Olympian' deity, when these are the kind of rites most commonly associated with the so-called 'chthonian' deities?

First and foremost, this last mentioned distinction is made even more rarely nowadays, and when it is applied, it is further qualified with several caveats.[232] Furthermore, the festival of Pro(s)charisteria is certainly not the first instance we hear of a processional ritual in honour of Athena that involved some sort of *μυστικά* or *ἄρρητα*. A plethora of sources (both literary and material) of great generic and chronological distribution attest to the festive procession of

[229] On Athena and her multiple functional roles in the lives of the Athenians see Parker (2005, 444–5).

[230] Arrhephoria: Burkert (1966), Robertson (1983), and Sourvinou-Inwood (1988). On whether *arrhēphoria* was a ritual activity rather than a festival see Parker (2005, 162–3). Epimenia: the honey-made offerings that were made once a month to the sacred snake in the acropolis: Hdt. 8.41; Harpocr. s.v. *ἐπιμήνια*. On Athena and Erechtheus or Erichthonios see Deacy (2007) and *eadem* (2008, ch. 4).

[231] See Deubner (1932, 17, n. 2): 'Hier werden geheime Riten angedeutet'.

[232] On the old chestnut of Olympian vs. chthonic see Parker (2005, 425), Schlesier's article in *Der Neue Pauly*, Scullion (1994), and Bremmer (2005, 11–12): 'It would be fruitful as well to think of the distinction between so-called Olympian and chthonian not as a polar opposition but as the two *idealtypische* ends of a cultic spectrum that is as rich as Greek civilization itself.'

Arrhephoria as involving *arrhēta* and constituting part of some kind of *μυστήρια*.[233] An enormous amount of secondary literature has been produced regarding the content and meaning of these rites and few would argue with any certainty about any aspect of this secret ceremony except perhaps its initiatory character.[234] The vagueness of the ancient testimonies on this secret rite in honour of Athena—which in all likelihood were connected to human and agricultural fertility—is best explained as a sign of reverence and pious anxiety over divulging the secret content and significance of the procession. In fact, a similar reason may partly explain the silence over the Pro(s)charisteria festival. If indeed it contained a mysteric segment, then it would be problematic to report. On the other hand, the festival that celebrated the *anodos* of Athena also contained a lavish public segment, which all Athenians in public office attended. How, then, is it that we do not hear anything of this festival from any other source? In all probability, as mentioned before, the festival would have been overshadowed by festivals of analogous character celebrated in honour of Kore or some other agrarian deity; or more likely, it would have been outshined or absorbed by an even more extravagant festival in honour of Athena such as the Panathenaea, Skira, or Plynteria. At any rate, the festival may have been at the peak of its glory at the time Peisistratus and his supporters decided to model the Phye procession on it. Deacy's suggestion that the Phye *pompe* followed the ritual grammar of the great Panathenaea (which by the year of Peisistratus' return from the exile would have been performed at least three times), although appealing, does not quite dovetail with the description of the festive procession as of great antiquity and simplicity (*ἀρχαίως καὶ λίαν ἁπλῶς*) that is found in the *Athenian Constitution*.

In his seminal *Polytheism and Society*, Parker rightly underlines the challenge of balancing the general impression of an asexual Athena with her undeniable close correlations with agricultural growth and fertility, as seen, for instance, in the well-known representation of Athena Nike with a helmet in one hand and a pomegranate in the other (Harpocr. s.v. *Νίκη Ἀθηνᾶ*), or the 'scandalous', as Parker calls it, sacrifice of a pregnant sheep in honour of Athena Skiras, as ordered by a sacred law (*LSS* 19.93).[235] Parker, who strongly opposes the idea of Athena as

[233] E.g. Eur. *Ion* 260–81; Paus. 1.27.3; [Apoll.] 3.14.6; Suda s.v. *Ἀρρηφορία*; EM s.v. *Ἀρρηφόροι καὶ ἀρρηφορία*; Hsch. s.v. *α* 7442 *ἀῤῥηφορία· ἑκατέρως λέγουσιν οἱ συγγραφεῖς, κἂν μὲν διὰ τοῦ <ε> <ἐρρηφορία>, διὰ τὸ τῇ Ἕρσῃ ἐπιτελεῖσθαι τὴν πομπήν· ἐὰν δὲ διὰ τοῦ <α>, ἐπεὶ ἐπ' ἀῤῥήτοις συνέστη* and *<ἀῤῥηφόρος>· μυσταγωγός*; Et Gen. s.v. Etymologicum Genuinum *α* 1230 *<Ἀρρηφόροι καὶ ἀρρηφορία>* (Call. fr. 741)*· ἑορτὴ ἐπιτελουμένη τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ ἐν τῷ Σκιροφοριῶνι μηνί· λέγεται δὲ <καὶ> διὰ τοῦ <ε> ἐρρηφορία. παρὰ τὸ τὰ ἄρρητα καὶ μυστήρια φέρειν· ἢ ἐὰν διὰ τοῦ <ε> παρὰ τὴν Ἕρσην τὴν Κέκροπος θυγατέρα, ἐρσηφορία· ταύτῃ γὰρ ἦγον τὴν ἑορτήν. οὕτως Σαλούστιος* (R. Pfeiffer, *Callimachus* II, p. xxix) AB, Sym. 1416, EM 1862. *Methodius.

[234] More on this topic in Sourvinou-Inwood (1988).

[235] Harpocr. s.v. *Νίκη Ἀθηνᾶ· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. ὅτι δὲ Νίκης Ἀθηνᾶς ξόανον ἄπτερον, ἔχον ἐν μὲν τῇ δεξιᾷ ῥόαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐωνύμῳ κράνος, ἐτιμᾶτο παρ' Ἀθηναίοις, δεδήλωκεν Ἡλιόδωρος ὁ περιηγητὴς ἐν α' Περὶ ἀκροπόλεως* (*FGrHist* 373 F 2). *LSS* 19.93: *Μαιμακτηριῶνος· Ἀθηνᾶι Σκιράδι οἷν ἐνκύμονα Δ, Σκίρωι οἷν Δ· ξύλα ἐπὶ τὸν βωμὸν* []· Cf. *SEG* 21,527 and *Hsp.* 7.1938.1,1. On the festival Skira—a festival which was aimed at married women, and whose principal presiding deities included not only Athena but also Demeter and Kore—see Parker (2005, 173–7). Just like in the case of the Procharisteria festival, our most extensive testimony on the Skira festival is that of Lykourgos and a fragment from his speech *On the Priestess* (VI.19 Conomis). Cf. Harpocr. s.v. *Σκίρον· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. Σκίρα ἑορτὴ παρ' Ἀθηναίοις, ἀφ' ἧς καὶ ὁ*

a 'multi-purpose goddess', or as a goddess with 'a finger in every pie, agriculture included', prefers to read the Suda entry (i.e. entry no. 1, while entry no. 3, which makes it obvious that we are dealing with two different festive occasions, is not mentioned) and the entry in Harpocration's *Lexicon* (nos 4a and 4b) as all referring to one and the same festival, a festival that indeed involved an *anodos*, but had been misattributed to Athena and in truth belonged to Kore.[236] The misattribution is, in Parker's view, the direct consequence of the Byzantine lexicographers' misunderstanding of Lykourgos' reference to the festival:

> Only one goddess has a 'coming up', and that is Persephone. Would the magistrates have given thanks to Athena for the coming up of Persephone? It is perhaps more likely that the lexicographers have mistaken one 'the goddess' for another. In that event Procharisteria will be yet another seasonal rite of Demeter, though one whose relation to the functionally similar Green-shoot offerings (*Chloïa*) is unclear.[237]

Having already discussed the fact that the two main deities who were celebrated as coming and going were mainly Dionysus and Kore (see above), it is easy to sympathize with Parker's scepticism and his reluctance to even contemplate the remote possibility that perhaps Athena indeed had at some point an *anodos* festival of agrarian nature called Pro(s)charisteria (reported by sources nos 1 and 2), which was perhaps in time eclipsed by a more extravagant festival of analogous character in honour of Athena, or, alternatively, overshadowed by the arrival of Kore, the more dominant goddess in her agrarian role, and her 'coming up' or 'leaving' festival named Pro(s)chairetēria (as accounted for by sources nos 3, 4, and 5). Initial reciprocal influence between the two festivals, as Deubner has remarked, and even subsequent functional substitution of one festival with the other, would certainly provide a good explanation for its fluctuating name.[238]

However, it is important to note here that our sources speak of two different festivals, not one and the same. The two different entries in Suda for the two different festivals make this fact plain enough.[239] In fact, the whole confusion over Pro(s)charisteria and Pro(s)chaireteria festivals may be traced back to the first compilations of Lykourgos' fragments and their ensuing editions, where the two fragments from Suda (no. 1) and Harpocration (no. 4) were grouped together as

μὴν Σκιροφοριών. φασὶ δὲ οἱ γράψαντες περί τε μηνῶν καὶ ἑορτῶν τῶν Ἀθήνησιν, ὧν ἐστι καὶ Λυσιμαχίδης, ὡς τὸ σκίρον σκιάδιόν ἐστι μέγα, ὑφ' ᾧ φερομένῳ ἐξ ἀκροπόλεως εἴς τινα τόπον καλούμενον Σκίρον πορεύονται ἥ τε τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἱέρεια καὶ ὁ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος ἱερεὺς καὶ ὁ τοῦ Ἡλίου· κομίζουσι δὲ τοῦτο Ἐτεοβουτάδαι. σύμβολον δὲ τοῦτο γίνεται τοῦ δεῖν οἰκοδομεῖν καὶ σκέπας ποιεῖν, ὡς τούτου τοῦ χρόνου ἀρίστου ὄντος πρὸς οἰκοδομίαν. καὶ Ἀθηνᾶν δὲ Σκιράδα τιμῶσιν Ἀθηναῖοι, ἣν Φιλόχορος μὲν ἐν β' Ἀτθίδος ἀπὸ Σκίρου τινὸς Ἐλευσινίου μάντεως κεκλῆσθαι, Πραξίων δὲ ἐν β' Μεγαρικῶν ἀπὸ Σκίρωνος. Cf. also Conomis (1961, 107–20). On the notions of Athena being asexual and androgynous and other gender-related issues see Deacy (2008, 82).

[236] More on this in Parker (2005, 196–7 and 418).

[237] Parker (2005, 196–7) cf. also (idem, 479), where an impressive appendix on the attested festivals includes a brief reference to Procharisteria as a variant form of Proschaereteria festival. Contra Deubner (1932, 17), Bérard (1974, 24).

[238] Deubner (1932, 17): 'Die einerseits zwischen Procharisteria und Procharisteria, anderseits zwischen Proschaereteria und Prochaereteria schwankende Überlieferung erklärt sich am besten, wenn zwei verschiedene Festnamen sich wechselseitig beeinflussen.'

[239] The two different entries in Suda for the two different festivals are not differentated in Parker (2005). Deubner (1932, 17, n. 3), on the other hand, marks the two separate entries.

belonging to the same speech. Nonetheless, a closer examination reveals instantly that the Suda entry comes from Lykourgos' speech *On the Priesthood* (*περὶ τῆς ἱερωσύνης*), whilst the Harpocration entry comes from a different speech entitled *On the Public Dispute between the Krokonidae and the Koironidae* (*Κροκωνιδῶν διαδικασία προς Κοιρωνίδας*). The first editor who grouped the two together and gave the one as the alternative title of the other was Sauppe back in 1850.[240] Blass in his edition of Lykourgos' fragments followed Sauppe in arbitrarily giving *περὶ ἱερωσύνης* as the alternative title for the *περὶ τῶν Κροκονιδῶν διαδικασία* without, however, fully committing himself.[241] More importantly he noted one of the main obstacles for this connection to be valid: Lykourgos' speech on the *diadikasia* against the Koironidae was considered to be one of his spurious speeches.[242] Finally, Conomis in his edition of Lykourgos' fragments, who followed Sauppe in grouping the fragments together as belonging to the same speech, in his detailed notes on the fragments comments on the origins of the identification of 1a with 1b:

> The identification of the title given by the Souda (fr. 1a) as *περὶ ἱερωσύνης* with Harpocration's and Athenaeus' *Κροκωνιδῶν διαδικασία προς Κοιρωνίδας* was suggested by Sauppe (p. 266) and accepted by Blass (p. 70) and Durrbach (p. 91). It was rejected by Töpffer, *Attische Genealogie*, 104 'aus mehreren Gründen' not given and by Burtt as it seems (p. 147). *It is based on the identification of fragments 1a and 1b* [emphasis mine] for which see below.[243]

The circularity of the argument thus becomes obvious. The only reason why these two titles of Lykourgos' speeches are given as alternatives for each other is the grouping of these two different festivals as alternatives for the same festival—and the only reason why these two festivals are grouped together as variant names/misspellings of the same festival is the fact that some of the editors of Lykourgos' works consider *On the Priesthood* to be an alternative title to his *On the Public Dispute between the Krokonidae and the Koironoidae*. The two names of the two festivals *προ(σ)χαριστήρια* and *προ(σ)χαιρητήρια* looked similar enough to have been thought of as orthographical variants or misspellings (depending on how one sees it) of the same festival. Considering and publishing *περὶ ἱερωσύνης* as the alternative title of the *Κροκωνιδῶν διαδικασία προς Κοιρωνίδας* nonetheless had further repercussions on the interpretation and reception of the Pro(s)charistēria festival. Since both the Krokonidae and the Koironidae were closely related to the cult of Demeter and Kore in the Eleusis—Krokon was Triptolemos' son and his descendants are mentioned as a *genos hieron* in relation to the *Megala Mystēria* in Eleusis, while Koirōn was thought to have been Triptolemos' illegitimate offspring—the fragment was interpreted as originating from a speech in which Lycourgos spoke either in defence of or in opposition to some dispute over the religious and legal rights of these two families.[244] Subsequently, the festivals

[240] Sauppe = Baiter, J. G. and Sauppe, H. (eds), *Oratores attici* 2, Zurich, 1838–50.

[241] Blass = Blass, Fr. (1899), *Lycurgus*, Leipzig (ed. major).

[242] Blass ad loc. On the number of Lykourgos' speeches and the spurious ones, see Conomis (1970, 76–9).

[243] Conomis (1961, 120).

[244] The speech is usually considered to have been in favour of the Krokōnidae and a reply to this speech was thought to have been given by Dinarchos' *Krokōnidōn diadikasia*. More on this topic in Conomis (1961, 121).

mentioned in the two different parts of the fragments (nos 1 [Conomis VII 1a] and 4 [Conomis VII 1b]) were bound to be interepreted as having been performed in honour of Kore rather than Athena. What's more, both in terms of general tone and content fragment VII 1a (no. 1) seems to fit better as part of another speech by Lycourgos entitled *περὶ τῆς ἱερείας* (Conomis VI 1–22). The two terms (*ἱέρεια* and *ἱερωσύνη*) are both semantically and visually close enough to cause confusion.[245] How easily the two titles (*περὶ ἱερωσύνης* and *περὶ τῆς ἱερείας*) could have been confused is exemplified by fragments VII 19 and 20.[246] Dindorf also notes ad loc.:

> Lycurgi oratio *περὶ τῆς ἱερωσύνης* ab nemine memoratur, *ἱερωσύνην* vero quandam ex ejus oratione *περὶ τῆς ἱερείας* memorat Harpocratio s.v. *τραπεζοφόρος*: ut *ἱερωσύνης* pro *ἱερείας*, de qua oratione pluribus constat veterum testimoniis, errore aut grammatici aut librarii illatum videri possit.

And, conversely, there are some editors and commentators, like Meier in Kiessling, who claim that the title of the sixth speech was not *περὶ τῆς ἱερείας* but *περὶ τῆς ἱερωσύνης*.[247] I wonder whether there was at some point in the transmission of the text a mistake in the given title of the speech in fragment VII 1a (*περὶ τῆς ἱερωσύνης*), for its content is so much more consonant with the general tone of Lykourgos' speech *περὶ τῆς ἱερείας*, where, according to Conomis, Lykourgos 'tried to exalt the office of the priestess in such a way as to make any intrusion upon her duties appear as a serious misdemeanour'.[248] Although I cannot press this argument any further in this chapter, I hope to have shown at least how precarious is the connection between VII 1a and VII 1b, and consequently, how arbitrary is the link between our testimonies nos 1 and 3, which allegedly provide evidence for the festivals of Pro(s)charisteria and Pro(s)chaereteria respectively as variants of the same festival.

On similar grounds (namely that only Kore has an *anodos* festival, and that Photios in his entry on the Stenia festival has mistaken Kore for Demeter), Parker denies Demeter her *anodos* as part of the Stēnia festival in Athens, although, as he himself admits, it is difficult to imagine that the 'coming up' of the Kore (usually taking place in the spring months) would be celebrated in an autumn month, such

[245] *ἱερεία* (from *ἱερεύω*) means 'sacrifice, festival', but also '*ἱερατεία*'. Cf. *CIG* 3491.23 (Thyatira); *ἱερώσυνος, η, ον* (in Attic inscriptions we meet both *ἱερώς-* *IG* 22.1358.15, and *ἱερεώς-* ib. 1356, 1361; *ἱερειώς-* ib. 1359) means 'priestly'. The *ἱερώσυνα, τά*, are 'the parts of a victim which were the priest's perquisites'; while *ἱερωσύνη*, in Attic inscriptions *ἱερεωσύνη*, means 'priesthood'. Cf. Hdt. 3.142 and the phrase *ἱερωσύνης μετασχεῖν*; while in the plural it can also denote 'priestly services, sacrifices'. E.g. Sch. Ar. *Pax* 923.

[246] VI 19: Harpocr. s.v. *σκίρον· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. – – φασὶ δὲ οἱ γράψαντες περί τε ἑορτῶν καὶ μηνῶν Ἀθήνησιν, ὧν ἐστι καὶ Λυσιμαχίδης* (*FGrHist* 366 F 3), *ὡς τὸ σκίρον σκιάδειόν ἐστι μέγα, ὑφ' ᾧ φερομένῳ ἐξ ἀκροπόλεως εἴς τινα τόπον καλούμενον Σκίρον πορεύονται ἥ τε τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἱέρεια καὶ ὁ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος ἱερεὺς καὶ ὁ τοῦ Ἡλίου· κομίζουσι δὲ τοῦτο Ἐτεοβουτάδαι, κτέ.*; VI 20: Harpocr. s.v. *τραπεζοφόρος· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. ὅτι ἱερωσύνης ὄνομά ἐστιν ἡ τραπεζοφόρος, <καὶ> ὅτι αὕτη τε καὶ ἡ κοσμὼ συνδιέπουσι πάντα τῇ τῆς Ἀθηνᾶς ἱερείᾳ, αὐτός τε ὁ ῥήτωρ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳδεδήλωκε καὶ Ἴστρος ἐν ιγ' τῶν Ἀττικῶν Συναγωγῶν* (*FGrHist* 334 F 9). Cf. also [Apoll.] 3.15.1.

[247] Kiessling = Meier, H. E. and Kiessling, F. G. (1847), *Lycurgi deperditarum orationum fragmenta*, Hale, p. 107.

[248] Conomis (1961, 109).

as Pyanopsion.[249] To be sure, on a Panhellenic level we know of at least two more deities (apart from Demeter and Kore) closely linked to fertility who were said to have 'coming up' festivals celebrated in their honour. The first is Pandora or Anesidora (the one who sends the gifts above), whose *anodos* is attested both in literature and in iconography, and the second is Semele, whose *anagōgē* was celebrated at the Herois festival at Delphi and possibly in Lerna, where she was brought back from Hades with Dionysus' help.[250] The minimum that can be established from these parallels is that it may be harder to dismiss the possibility of an *anodos* festival, celebrated in honour of deities other than Kore, than it was thought before. More importantly, it may be hard to dismiss the possibility of an *anodos* festival celebrated in honour of Athena altogether. Interestingly enough, in fragment VI 8 (Blass 35) from Lykourgos' speech *On the Priestess* (*περὶ τῆς ἱερείας*) we hear about a calendar regulation that ordered a sacrificial victim for Pandrosos every time someone sacrificed an ox to Athena. That additional sacrificial victim was called *ἐπίβοιον*.[251] In fact, the dative *Πανδρόσῳ* (B C P Q V) is an emendation of the original *Πανδώρᾳ* (Q P NA V) supported by epigraphical parallels such as *IG* II^2 1039.57–8. It would be fascinating to have some solid evidence of Athena being honoured with sacrifices along with another epiphanic deity who also had an *anodos* festival, but even so, the shared cultic honours with Pandrosos (who also has apparent links to agricultural and human fecundity) give some ground to my hypothesis of Athena's direct or indirect links to fertility and vegetation. Having said that, I would like to make it clear that I do not by any means subscribe to theories that approach Athena as 'a primeval all-powerful Mother' with 'power over fertility both of the fields and the womb'.[252] I am thinking more along the lines of Bremmer's baggy and accommodating definition of the character of Greek gods and goddesses: 'Polytheistic gods are rather fluid and do both tend to assume elements of each other's character and to preserve locally in their cult elements of earlier stages of Greek religion, which may not have been adopted or survived elsewhere.'[253] In all probability, Athena

[249] Photios s.v. *Στήνια: ἑορτὴ Ἀθήνησιν, ἐν ᾗ ἐδόκει ἡ ἄνοδος γενέσθαι τῆς Δήμητρος· ἐλοιδοροῦντο δ' ἐν αὐτηῖ νυκτὸς αἱ γυναῖκες ἀλλήλαις· οὕτως Εὔβουλος* (fr. 146 K/A, 148 Hunter) with Parker (2005, 480). On Kore's return celebrated in spring, see Richardson (1974, 284–5) and Burkert (1985, 260–1).

[250] Pandora's *anodos* is portrayed in a number of fifth-century vase paintings like the Oxford volute crater which depicts Epimetheus holding a large hammer offering ritual reception to Pandora, who is rising from the ground (*ARV*^{2}, 612, n. 1). Pandora's *anodos* was the subject matter of Sophocles' *Pandora, or Sphyrokopoi* (fr. 482 Radt), according to Tzetzes' commentary. More on Pandora's *anodos* in Bowie (1993, 145–6), who rightly thinks that Aristophanes may have modelled Eirene's *anodos* on Pandora's ritually induced *anodos*. The name [A]nesidora is attested on a white-ground kylix by the Tarquinia Painter (*ARV*^{2}, 869, n. 55) dated *c.*460 BC. In Classical and post-Classical literature, *Anesidora* is a cultic epithet of Gē or Demeter. Cf. Soph. fr. 826 Radt; Schol. Ar. *Av.* 971; Plut. *Mor.* 745a; Paus. 1.31.4; Hsch. s.v. *Ἀνησιδώρα*, Phot. s.v. *Ἀνησιδώρα*, etc. The ancient scholiast on Euclid's *Elements* (*ad deff. 6 sq.* Heiberg) is perhaps the most interesting of all: it is there that we hear of the cult statue of the Athenians honouring an androgynous deity called Anesidora, who in all respects resembled the typical statue of a female deity except the affixed beard on its face. Semele's *anagōgē* at Delphi: Plut. *Mor.* 293c; Semele's *anagōgē* at Lerna: Paus. 2.31.2 with Bowie (1993, 145–6).

[251] Harpocr. s.v. *ἐπίβοιον· Λυκοῦργος ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἱερείας. Φιλόχορος δ' ἐν β'* (*FGrHist* 328 F 10) *φησὶν οὕτως· 'ἐὰν δέ τις τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ θύῃ βοῦν, ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστι καὶ τῇ Πανδρόσῳ θύειν οἶν, καὶ ἐκαλεῖτο τὸ θῦμα ἐπίβοιον'* with Conomis ad loc.

[252] As Parker (2005, 396) puts it.

[253] Bremmer (2005, 163).

did receive thanksgiving sacrifices (*procharistēria*) in advance in her civic role as protector of Athens and guarantor of its agrarian wealth and general economic prosperity. That festival may have subsequently been absorbed in a more lavish festive procession in honour of Athena, or eclipsed by a festival of agricultural character in honour of Kore and/or Demeter. Prima facie the cult of Athena may seem incompatible with the cult of the two goddesses who presided over fertility, but things are not quite so. On the contrary, Athena remained closely linked to the cult of Demeter and Kore and at times she even shared a temple with them; in the Athenian demes of Phlya and Myrrhinous, for example, Athena Tithrone shared a temple with Kore the first-born, the Semnae, and Demeter Anesidora.[254] And a little further on, at the Athenian suburb called Ἱερὰ Συκή ('Sacred Fig Tree'), Athena was worshipped along with Kore and Demeter in the same sanctuary that was established to commemorate Demeter's *xenismos* by the Athenian king and hero Phytalos—note here that this Athenian hero's name originates from the same etymological root φυ- (*b^heh_2u-) clearly visible in Phye's name.[255] The whole *theoxenic* episode was inscribed on an inscription still readable in Pausanias' day. It seems that Phytalos' descendants in Athens enjoyed privileges equivalent to those of members of the priestly personnel in Eleusis, if we are to judge from the tradition that has Theseus' purification performed by the Phytalidae.[256]

If we were to stick to modern rigid demarcation lines about the ancient deities, their characters, and their sphere of influence, it would be hard to justify Athena's presence in a cultic context so manifestly coupled with fertility and vegetation—just as it would be hard to explain away Athena's presence in artefacts that present her amongst deities who all featured in the secret segment of the Great Mysteries. The so called *regina vasorum*, the relief hydria from St Petersburg, is surely one telling example.[257] The Roman bust of Athena sprouting out of a crocus flower in Eleusis (see Fig. 2.4) is also puzzling.[258] Not to mention the 'shocking' pregnant sacrificial animals which were offered not only to Athena Skiras (as mentioned above), but also to Athena Polias.[259] More importantly, it is in one of these slight

[254] Paus. 1.32.4.

[255] Beekes s.v. φυτόν. On Phytalos and the Attic genos of Phytalidae, see Paus. 1.37.4. On the location of 'Sacred Fig', see Philostr. *VS* 2.20.

[256] Plut. *Thes.* 12.1 and 23.5. It is tempting to look at them as a genos of priesthood with pure Athenian origins that were 'outshone' by the Kērykes and the Eumolpidae after the union of Athens with Eleusis, with the centre of attention shifting from Athenian Eleusinion to Eleusinian Megaron. Each year the procession that escorted the hiera from Eleusis to Athens was made to stop at Hiera Sykē to pay tribute to the goddess's first stop in Athens.

[257] Relief hydria from Cumae; St Petersburg (Hermitage 525); after Baumeister (1885, 474, fig. 520) with Clinton (1992, XX) and idem (2004).

[258] The bust is in now in the Museum of Eleusis. I have been unable to collect any more information on this artefact from the third Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in Athens, which informed me that the artefact was 'officially unpublished'. The chthonic character of Athena in this particular image is emphasized not only by having the goddess sprouting out of a flower, but also by the large number of small snakes coiling on or emerging from her breastplate.

[259] Bremmer (2005, 156): 'Although the rule that goddesses receive female victims and gods male ones is only a late antique construct, as the archaeological evidence has demonstrated, it certainly fits this case in which the victims are always ewes and sows, with the special case of a cow for Marathonian Ge, and the recipients always goddesses. The recipients are the Eumenides, Ge, Rhea, Demeter, Daeira, Theban Pelarge, Hera Antheia, Artemis, Athena Skiras and Athena Polias, and, finally, unknown recipients in the months Pyanopsion (LSS 20 A 28) and Gamelion (LSS 20 A 43) at Marathon. This is

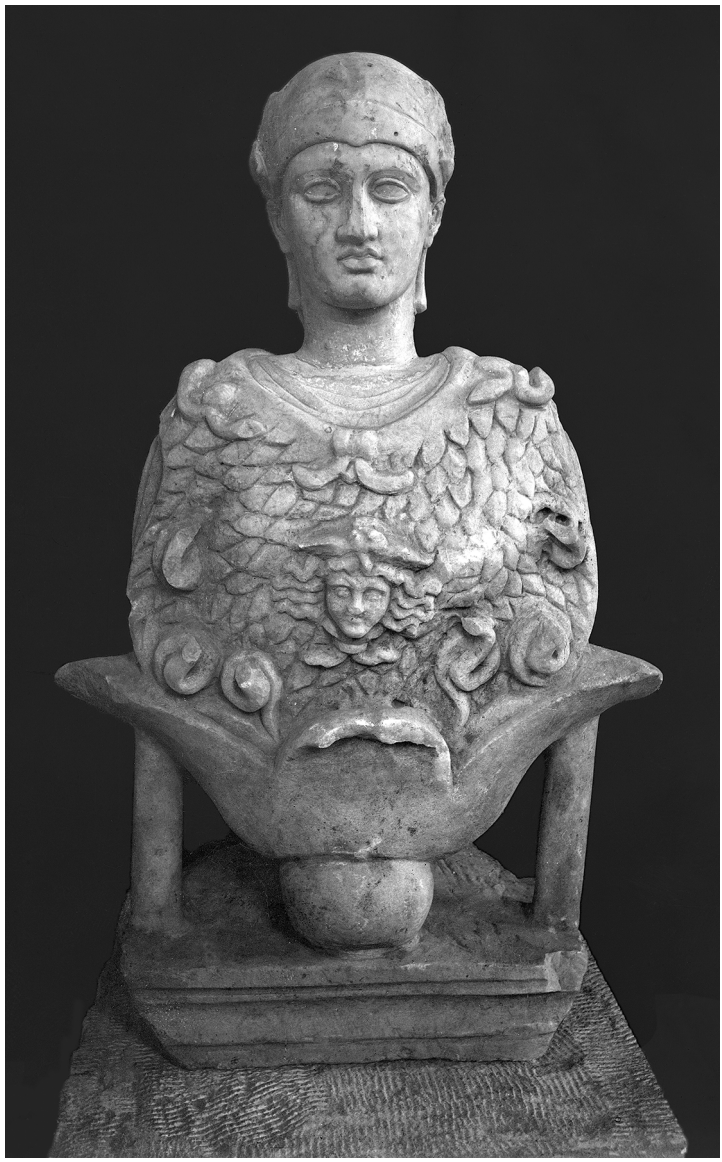


Fig. 2.4. Roman bust of Athena sprouting out of a crocus flower from the temple of Demeter and Kore in Eleusis, now in the Museum of Eleusis (Inv.-Nr. 39).

not a homogeneous group of divinities. Some could reasonably be called chthonic, such as the Eumenides, but this is hardly the case with Hera or Athena. Does this perhaps mean that we have here a sacrifice with varying meanings, depending on the context?' Cf. also Georgoudi (2010). The issue of 'chthonian' Athena, and generally the 'chthonian' aspects of many of the so-called 'Olympian' deities, is thoroughly discussed in Appendix 4 in Parker (2011), esp. 284–6.

deviations from the canon of the strictly speaking poliadic and asexual Athena, namely in the myth of Hephaestus' attempted rape and the birth of Erichthonios, that the goddess acquires some more feminine and sexually charged features and becomes 'almost the mother' of all Athenians.[260]

SYNOPSIS

To sum up, this section has argued that in the festive procession of the Pro(s)charisteria festival, we may well have found a good ritual parallel for Peisistratus' staged epiphany festival, since a) this is the only attested *anodos* festival that involves Athena, Peisistratus' divine escort; and b) because the insistence of our sources on Phye's name meaning 'growth' and her occupation as a flower girl—which sort of information is unparalleled in any other accounts of enacted epiphanies—could be interpreted as reminiscent of the main scope of the original festival, which was to propitiate the goddess *ὑπὲρ τῶν φυομένων καρπῶν*. Furthermore, c) the Suda's emphasis on the festival's great antiquity dovetails well with the comment made by the author of *The Constitution of the Athenians*, that Peisistratus' advent was orchestrated 'in an antiquated and extremely simple manner' (*ἀρχαίως καὶ λίαν ἁπλῶς*). d) Finally, a brief and schematic report on Athena's linkage to fertility both in myth and in cult, along with some brief thoughts on the fluidity of the character and the nature of each of the Greek deities, should hopefully allow us to view a festival such as the Pro(s)-charisteria not as dissonant with the overall poliadic character of Athena.[261]

Now, the counterargument is, of course, that although the general ritual grammar of the episode may be that of Athena's *anodos* festival, the focus in the episode is not the arrival of the goddess, but that of her mortal companion. The focal point, and ultimately the very goal of the Phye epiphany procession, is to ensure Peisistratus' *kathodos*, his safe homecoming journey. The very *raison d'être* of Athena's presence in the *pompē* is to request the ritual reception of Peisistratus.[262] However, although one might have expected the human to announce and

[260] Deacy (2007) and (2008, ch. 6) on Erichthonios, as the first man to have yoked horses to the chariot, as a possible model for Peisistratus On Athenians being the children of Athena, see the introductory section in Loraux (1993), entitled 'Autochthony and the Athenian imaginary'.

[261] After all, offering sacrifices was the climax of the majority of festive processions known to us: Kavoulaki (1999, 302ff.), who underlines that offering sacrifices is part of the festivals' agenda: communication with the divine and securing the gods' blessing for the community.

[262] The conspicuous position of the imperative *δέχεσθε* in the mouth of the herald who proclaimed the return of Peisistratus in the Herodotean version of the event may also be reminiscent of a cultic vocabulary that was in use in the context of these epiphanic festivals: '*Ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, δέκεσθε ἀγαθῷ νόῳ Πεισίστρατον, τὸν αὐτὴ ἡ Ἀθηναίη τιμήσασα ἀνθρώπων μάλιστα κατάγει ἐς τὴν ἑωυτῆς ἀκρόπολιν.' . . . καὶ οἱ> ἐν τῷ ἄστεϊ πειθόμενοι τὴν γυναῖκα εἶναι αὐτὴν τὴν θεὸν προσεύχοντό τε τὴν ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἐδέκοντο Πεισίστρατον*. Compare also the similar description in AP 14.4: *καὶ ὁ μὲν Πεισίστρατος ἐφ' ἅρματος εἰσήλαυνε, παραιβατούσης τῆς γυναικός, οἱ δ' ἐν τῷ ἄστει προσκυνοῦντες ἐδέχοντο θαυμάζοντες*. (*ἀπο*)/(*ὑπο*)/(*προσ*)-*δέχεσθαι* and their cognates are all technical terms for announcing and requesting the reception of a divine epiphany in both myth and cult. E.g. [Apoll.] *Lib.* 3.14.7; Paus. 2.35.4, 7.27.9, 1.37.2; Diod. Sic. 5.4.3. Compare also here how the problematic reception of Phoebus' birth epiphany by potential cult centres is described by the author of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (47–8): *αἳ δὲ μάλ' ἐτρόμεον καὶ ἐδείδισαν, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη | Φοῖβον δέξασθαι καὶ πιοτέρη περ ἐοῦσα*. Initially, Delos seemed

request the ritual reception of the divine, in the Phye episode it is Athena who makes it possible for Peisistratus to perform his own 'epiphany' in the political scene of Athens. This highly significant reversal of roles in the ritual is indicative of Peisistratus' and Megakles' exceptional aptitude for manipulating well-established religious and political symbols so as to serve their own political agenda. Phye's ritual impersonation of Athena in the ritual procession allows not simply for Peisistratus' reintroduction to the community, but, more significantly, for his reinstatement in the political consciousness of the Athenians as the ideal leader.

A close literary parallel of ritual reception of a new leader initiated by a female deity can be found in the climactic scene in Aristophanes' *Birds*: a triumphal chariot procession brings Peisetaerus and his wife-to-be Basileia onstage.[263] Basileia reintroduces Peisetaerus to the community, while simultaneously her very presence reaffirms and, by means of political and religious semeiology, articulates his new political identity as a divinely ordained *tyrannos*.[264] The herald asks for the ritual reception of the new *tyrannos*: 'O you whose fortune is entirely good, whose blessings are too great to describe, o thrice-blessed winged race of the birds, accept your *tyrannos* in these prosperous chambers' (*Ὦ πάντ' ἀγαθὰ πράττοντες, ὦ μείζω λόγου, | ὦ τρισμακάριον πτηνὸν ὀρνίθων γένος, | δέχεσθε τὸν τύραννον ὀλβίοις δόμοις*).[265] Peisetaerus enters the scene wielding the thunderbolt and is received as the new Zeus.[266] Basileia (a playful pun between the Greek words *βασίλεια* 'queen', and *βασιλεία* 'kingship') is the stewardess of Zeus' thunderbolt and everything else that goes with it: planning, law and order, wisdom, and so on.[267] Consequently, Basileia may not exactly be Zeus' daughter, but she is *Διός πάρεδρος*. Basileia is a female deity who is a close acolyte of the father of the gods, and more importantly, a guarantor of civic order just like Dike in *Septem* and Athena in the Phye procession.[268]

All three of these female deities (Dike, Athena, and Basileia) restore (or at least attempt to restore) to power political figures (Polyneikes, Peisistratus, and

equally preoccupied by the same fear of facing the birth epiphany of the *atasthalos* god: *ἀσπασίη κεν ἐγώ γε γονὴν ἑκάτοιο ἄνακτος | δεξαίμην*; but she finally yields when Leto takes an oath that the island will become renowned as Apollo's cult centre (63–4). Similar terminology is used in Callimachus' *Bath of Pallas* for the reception of Athene in the form of her cult statue during her renowned Argive festival Plynteria (Call. 5.137–40). The same technical vocabulary is also attested in an inscription that records the preparations of the new Athenian *phylae* (Antigonis and Demetrias) for the Eleusinian Mysteries, probably dating to the third century BC (*IG* II (5), 385d, 20–4). The term *ὑποδοχή* here denotes the reception of Iacchus in the form of his statue in Eleusis on the night of the 21st of Boedromion.

[263] Bonner (1943, 208–10). The chariot is not explicitly mentioned in our text, but as Bowie (1993, 165) very aptly puts it: 'it is somewhat unlikely that the queen of the universe was forced to walk to her wedding, as a mere *chamaipous*, the bride who was too poor to ride'.

[264] In lines 1675 and 1708, Peisetaeros is emphatically called a *tyrannos*. As Bowie (1993, 171) notes, the very name Peisetaeros (from *peitho* and *hetairos*, literally 'the one who persuades his companions') contains allusions to Peisistratus (from *peitho* and *stratos*, literally 'the one who persuades the army').

[265] Ar. *Av.* 106–8.

[266] Ar. *Av.* 1706–65 and esp. l. 1765 where Peistheterus is saluted as the most exalted of the gods. Cf. Kleinknecht (1937, 294), Bowie (1993, 165), Kavoulaki (1999, 313–18).

[267] Ar. *Av.* 1537–41.

[268] More on Basileia and her connection to political power bestowed on Peisetaeros in Sommerstein (1987, *ad* 153–41). On Basileia and her close correlations to Athena, see Bonner (1943, 208–10).

Peisetaerus respectively), who have previously been viewed as problematic in the eyes of the community. In all three cases, the means to achieve their goals are provided by clear manipulation of well-rooted and therefore easily recognizable religious semeiology: Peisetaerus appropriates Zeus' thunderbolt, and gets married to Basileia, a female deity closely associated with the old world order; Polyneikes artistically portrays himself as the chosen one of Dike; and finally, Peisistratus and his allies utilize the ritual schema of the processional advent of their tutelary deity into the heart of the civic community that was celebrated in the Pro(s)charisteria festival.[269] In order to force the citizenry to engage, both visually and conceptually, in a dialogue that will determine their future civic order, the new *tyrannos* and his supporters employ the ritual grammar of Athena's *anodos* with the all-important reversal of roles for human and divine actors discussed above. Athena's *anodos* not only facilitates Peisistratus' *kathodos*, the whole scheme seems to imply that the latter is a prerequisite for the former.

In many ways the Phye episode provides an ideal example for the purposes of this book, as it demonstrates both the Greeks' cultural familiarity with enacted epiphanies and the increased receivability of the participants in sacred festive occasions such as epiphanic festivals (on which more in chapter 6). Had the Greeks been unfamiliar with the representational strategy whereby a mortal is visually made to resemble the popular image of an immortal by means of imitating its physique and divine paraphernalia, it would not have been possible for the tall and beautiful Phye to lead Peisistratus' staging of his own advent festival; and it would have simply been impossible for Aristomenes and his friend to dress up like the Dioscuri and stage a performance that was perceived by their enemies as the twin gods appearing in the flesh.[270] Note here that in both narratives the emphasis is on the fact that the human perceivers happen to be in the middle of a festive occasion: the Spartans were celebrating the annual festival in honour of the twin gods and Peisistratus in all likelihood orchestrated his advent along the ritual guidelines of an advent festival of Athena. It is exactly this festive, emotionally charged atmosphere (more on which in chapter 6) that raises the viewers' expectations and hunger for a divine epiphany. However, it is the cultural practice of ritual impersonation that makes it possible for both the Athenians and the Spartans to conceptualize Phye as Athena and Aristomenes as one of Zeus' sons, to *look* at two human beings and *see* two divine ones.

[269] In 403 BC, almost 150 years after Peisistratus organized his epiphany procession, a festive procession to the acropolis led the exiled democrats back to the city. The same procession along with the thanksgiving sacrifices offered to Athena on arrival (*charistēria*) marked for Thrasybulus and his men their reintegration into the civic community and for Athens the end of the civil strife. The procession is described in Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.39 and Lys. 13.80–1. More on the topic in Strauss (1985, 69–72) and Kavoulaki (1999, 304).

[270] Images of Dioscuri as twin riders: see Fig. 7.1. Cf. also Paus. 4.27.1–3; Cook (1914, 760–75, esp. 761–2 and figs 554, 555).

3

Healing epiphanies

Epiphanies as diagnostic and therapeutic tools

Even in our modern western society, where the majority of the population has adopted a biomedical explanation of illness, research has shown that under the pressure of life-threatening or chronic disease, most of us are ready to reconsider, if only partly, a non-biomedical (holistic, religious, mystical, or other) explanation of our illness.[1] Yet, this is far from expecting a divine manifestation to reveal to the patient the cause and possibly the right treatment for an illness, as was often the case in the Graeco-Roman world. Visitations from healing deities in the course of a dream or waking reality (henceforth referred to as divine epiphanies) are attested by literary, epigraphic, as well as archaeological and numismatic sources from the late Archaic to the Hellenistic and Imperial eras and beyond.[2]

This chapter examines divine manifestations in the context of disease and healing by focusing on the divine origins of the disease and on epiphanies as diagnostic and therapeutic tools in Greek culture. Along with the fear of death, disease is one of the most significant crises an individual has to face. More importantly, it seems to be unavoidable in the sense that everyone will eventually confront disease at some point in the course of their life. Since epiphanies take place in the context of critical situations such as war, siege, famine, drought etc. (see chapter 1), it comes as no surprise that they also take place in the context of both physical and psychological illnesses. One must not forget, however, that disease is not necessarily confined to the private realm. It is also of concern to the community, to the extent that the physical and psychological health of the individual is a prerequisite for a healthy and thriving community and the perpetuation of its sociopolitical structures and cultural values.

[1] See for instance, Andary, Stolk, and Klimidis (2003, 104–19) and MacLachlan (2006, 60–3).

[2] The Edelsteins (1998) provide an informative discussion of the relevant literary and epigraphic material. Hart (2000), on the other hand, offers a review of the relevant archaeological and numismatic evidence. On healing cults in the ancient Mediterranean, see the essays collected by Dal Covolo and Sfameni Gasparro (2008) and Michaelides (2014, part 8). For a first overview on health and disease in the ancient world see King's introduction (1–11) in King (2005). Lloyd (2003) offers an insightful exposition of illness and its impact of the individual and the community as found in literary sources ranging from Homer to tragedy, and from the Hippocratic works to Aristotle and Galen. Nutton (2013, esp. 37–52 and 280–98) provides an informative and up-to-date survey of the topic. Finally, Oberhelman (2013) offers an enlightening exposition of the complexities of the ancient medical and healing spectrum. Some of the ideas presented here are also discussed in Petridou (2014) and (forthcoming).

Generally speaking, gods are perceived to be both the ones who grant the individual and the community a healthy being, and the ones who deprive them of it.[3] Potentially every Greek deity was able to affect negatively or positively matters of human health.[4] In Troizen, for instance, Pausanias saw the temple of Pan Lyterios (the one who releases from the disease). The people of Troizen were afflicted by a plague and the god manifested himself in the sleep of the magistrates and supplied a cure for the epidemic.[5] In Tanagra, it was Hermes who averted a pestilence from the city by manifesting himself in the form of a youth and carrying a ram on his shoulders around the city walls.[6] In Aigialeia, Artemis and Apollo were entreated by the locals, came to the acropolis, and saved the community from the deadly disease that had befallen them.[7] To commemorate the divine intervention and aversion of the disease on a poliadic level, people established temples (like the temple of Apollo in Bassae), festivals (like the Troizenian festival in honour of Apollo), and/or annual sacrifices (like the annual sacrifice of a red goat outside the city gates of Cyrene).[8]

The deities who manifested themselves either to cure diseases or to impose them on mortals as a form of punishment (*theodicy*) vary in different cities at different times.[9] There is, however, a group of deities that were traditionally associated with both curative and preventive medicine, such as Apollo (with the cultic titles Paion and Epikourios) and his son Asclepius, Herakles, Athena Hygeia, and, imported from the East, Sarapis, Isis, and Zeus Hypsistos, a major

[3] Parker (1983, 234–56); Lloyd (2003, 12–1); Willi (2008, 159).

[4] Nutton (2013, 104–15).

[5] Paus. 2.32.6 Spiro: *Τροιζηνίων γὰρ τοῖς τὰς ἀρχὰς ἔχουσιν ἔδειξεν ὀνείρατα ἃ εἶχεν ἄκεσιν λοιμοῦ πιέσαντος <τὴν Τροιζηνίαν,> Ἀθηναίους δὲ μάλιστα.*

[6] Paus. 9.22.1–2 Spiro: *ἐς δὲ τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ τὰ ἱερὰ τοῦ τε Κριοφόρου καὶ ὃν Πρόμαχον καλοῦσι, τοῦ μὲν ἐς τὴν ἐπίκλησιν λέγουσιν ὡς ὁ Ἑρμῆς σφισιν ἀποτρέψαι νόσον λοιμώδη περὶ τὸ τεῖχος κριὸν περιενεγκών, καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ <Κάλαμις> ἐποίησεν ἄγαλμα Ἑρμοῦ φέροντα κριὸν ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων.*

[7] Paus. 2.7.7–8 Spiro: *οἱ δὲ παῖδας ἑπτὰ καὶ ἴσας παρθένους ἐπὶ τὸν Σύθαν ποταμὸν ἀποστέλλουσιν ἱκετεύοντας· ὑπὸ τούτων δὲ πεισθέντας τοὺς θεοὺς φασιν ἐς τὴν τότε ἀκρόπολιν ἐλθεῖν.*

[8] Temples: Paus. 8.41.8–9; festivals and annual sacrifices: *LSS* 115 A 4–7. Cf. Parker (1983, 275, n. 90). On the temple of Apollo at Bassae, see Cooper (1996).

[9] Disease as *theodicy*: Ar. Fr. 58 'Heroes' K/A; Hdt. 6.84 (King Cleomenes and the wrath of gods); 3.33 (Cambyses' madness is the result of an insult to the god Apis); in Eur. *Hipp*. 141–4 the chorus wonders who among the gods is responsible for Phaedra's unusual behaviour. Is she possessed (*entheos*) by Pan, Hekate, Korybantes, or the Mother of the gods? The queen admits that she is afflicted by madness sent by some god. Athena is behind the god-sent madness of Ajax (Soph. *Aj*. 172–86, 756–77). In the Hippocratic treatise *On the Sacred Disease* (1.11 Jouanna) the purifiers try to diagnose the divinity responsible for the disease: if the patient imitates a goat, or roars, or suffers from convulsions in his right side, then the Mother of the gods is responsible. If he utters a loud cry and sounds like a horse, then it is Poseidon who should be held responsible. On the divinity of disease in this Hippocratic treatise and the Hippocratic corpus as a whole see van der Eijk (2005, 48–60). Orestes' unusual state of mind is interpreted as a result of theodicy. Cf. also Paus. 8.28.13 (see chapter 1), where Athena gets wounded, in one of her guises as a warrior, by Teuthis and the whole city is tortured by a *φθινώδης νόσος*; Call. *Fr*. 194, 28–31; Cic. *DND*, III, 35, 84: 'nor did Asclepius cause him to waste away and perish from some painful and lingering disease'. On inscriptions from Epidaurus where Asclepius punishes the non-believers and those who don't pay their fee (*iatra*), see *IG* IV^2 1,258 and from Pergamon *IvP* III, 161A; on inscriptions commemorating or requesting relief from god-sent disease see van Straten (1981, 101ff.) and Parker (1983, 254ff.). On propitiatory inscriptions from Phrygia and Lydia (mainly from the second and third century AD), which reflect the belief that disease is the result of divine punishment for grave sin, see Chaniotis (1995).

healing deity of later antiquity. In addition, great popularity is attested for the cult of Heros Iatros (*ἥρως ἰατρός*, the hero physician). This figure was known under different names in different places: Amphilochos in Athens, Aristomachos in Marathon, and Oresinios in Eleusis; while in Rhamnous he was known as Aristomachos and later on as Amphiaraos.[10] In Oropos the cult of the hero doctor Amphiaraos became the leading healing cult, which soon acquired Panhellenic status and attracted visitors from all over the Greek-speaking world.

Both Isis and Sarapis employed epiphanic revelations to diagnose and heal disease. Temple medicine and incubation were practiced in the temples of both gods.[11] Diodorus attests to the popularity of Isis as a healing deity who primarily manifests herself in dreams:

> For practically the entire inhabited world is their witness, in that it eagerly contributes to the honours of Isis because she manifests herself in healings (*διὰ τὴν ἐν ταῖς θεραπείαις ἐπιφάνειαν*). For standing above the sick in their sleep she gives them aid for their diseases (*κατὰ γὰρ τοὺς ὕπνους ἐφισταμένην διδόναι τοῖς κάμνουσι βοηθήματα πρὸς τὰς νόσους*) and works remarkable cures upon those who obey her (*τοὺς ὑπακούσαντας αὐτῇ παραδόξως ὑγιάζεσθαι*). And many who have been despaired of by the physicians because of the difficult nature of their illness are saved by the same goddess, while many are those those who have altogether lost their sight or the use of some other part of their body, and whenever they take refuge in the goddess (*πρὸς ταύτην τὴν θεὸν καταφύγωσιν*), their bodies are restored to health.[12]

In the third book of his *Hieroi Logoi* (*Or.* 49.45–6 Keil) Aristides gives the impression that he had frequented the temple of Isis in Smyrna much as he had done so in the case of other healing deities, and that, in fact, he believed that he enjoyed some kind of privileged relationship with the goddess:[13]

> (45) Nearly the same as this, still at the beginning of my sickness, was the command of Isis, which concerned geese themselves. I was staying at the warm springs, and the goddess ordered me to sacrifice two geese to her. I went to the city, having first sent ahead men to look for them and having told them to meet me at the temple of Isis with the geese. On that day there were no other geese for sale, except for only two. When my people approached and tried to buy them, the man who raised the geese said that he was not able to sell them, for it was foretold to him by Isis to keep them for Aristides (*προειρῆσθαι γὰρ αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τῆς Ἴσιδος φυλάττειν Ἀριστείδῃ*), and that he would surely come and sacrifice them. When he learned the whole story, he was awestruck and

[10] Parker (1996, 176–7); Nutton (2013, 106–15).

[11] Witt (1971, 185–97). Although there is no evidence for incubation in the Latin West: Renberg (2003) and Lang (2013, 58–100). Cf. also Bricault (2014), where more bibliography can be found.

[12] Diod. Sic. 1.25.4–5.

[13] Cf. also *HL* 3. 49–50; 4.97; 1.25. Behr (1968, 148–9) views Isis as playing a rather secondary role in Aristides' system of 'Eclectic Polytheism', and as being 'a mere adjunct to Sarapis'. Wild (1984) provides a comprehensive study of all the known sanctuaries of Isis and Sarapis in the Roman world. Isis' close links with the concept of 'knowledge'—both on a (para)etymological and on an ontological level—may also be an aspect of the Isis-related regiosity which may have appealed to Aristides' eclectic tastes. The Greeks etymologize Isis from *oida/Fidein* and both in the Egypt and the Graeco-Roman world Isis was often thought as the cultural benefactor who invented writing and reading and who was a facilitator of knowledge in general. On the Greek etymology of the name of Isis, see Richter (2011, 214–15). On similarities between the healing cult of Isis and that of Asclepius in Pergamon, see Harrison (2001).

> having prostrated himself (*ἐξεπλάγη τε καὶ προσκυνήσας*), gave the geese to them. And I learned these things at the sacrifice itself. (46) There was also a light from Isis and other things which cannot be told and which pertained to my salvation (*ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ φῶς παρὰ τῆς Ἴσιδος καὶ ἕτερα ἀμύθητα φέροντα εἰς σωτηρίαν*).[14]

The popularity of Sarapis as a healing deity, in particular, rose in the Hellenistic period, when his status rivalled that of Asclepius.[15] That sleeping in the temple of Sarapis resulted (or at least should result) in divinely inspired dreams, in which the god was expected to appear to manifest himself, is implied by Cicero's words: *an Aesculapius, an Serapis potest nobis praescribere per somnum curationem valetudinis*.[16] Occasionally he was imagined to appear with Asclepius and even look like him: 'Sarapis also appeared (*ἐφάνη*) on the same night, both he himself and Asclepius. They were marvellous in their beauty and magnitude and in some way like one another.'[17] Alternatively, though, he could appear looking like his statue, or as an Asclepius-like figure accompanied by Cerberus. From Diodorus we also learn of Hemithea of Chersonesos, another healing deity who used to manifest herself in the sleep of the patients, who would practise incubation in her temple.[18] Hemithea's temple was so popular that during the Persian wars her sanctuary was one of the very few that were not plundered.

The majority of our evidence in the Greek world, however, comes from Asclepius' cult; as a result our discussion will focus primarily on Asclepius' epiphanies, but an attempt to cast the net wider will be made as well.

APOLLO AND ASCLEPIUS: PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ASPECTS OF DISEASE

> *Ἰητρικὴ δὲ καὶ μαντικὴ καὶ πάνυ ξυγγενέες εἰσὶν,*
> *ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῶν δύο τεχνέων πατὴρ εἷς Ἀπόλλων,*
> *ὁ καὶ πρόγονος ἡμέων, ἐούσας καὶ ἐσομένας νούσους*
> *προαγορεύων καὶ νοσέοντας καὶ νοσήσοντας ἰώμενος.*

> Medicine and prophecy are very closely related, since of the two arts Apollo is the single father. He, who is my ancestor, declares the diseases that are and that will be and he heals those to whom sickness is coming and to whom sickness has come.[19]
>
> Hipp. *Epist.* 15.32

[14] Trans. Behr (1986).

[15] Van Straten (1981, 98) and fig. 42 for a relief depicting incubation performed in an *enkoimeterion* of Serapis.

[16] Cic. *Div.* II 123; see also Tac. *Hist.* IV 84.5. On Sarapis' relationship to Asclepius see Bricault (2014).

[17] Aristid. *Or.* 49.45–7.

[18] Diod. Sic. 5.63: *τοῖς τε γὰρ κάμνουσι κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους ἐφισταμένην φανερῶς διδόναι τὴν θεραπείαν καὶ πολλοὺς τοῖς ἀπεγνωσμένοις πάθεσι συνεχομένους [περιτυχόντας] ὑγιασθῆναι· πρὸς δὲ τούτοις [τὸ περὶ] τὰς δυστοκούσας τῶν γυναικῶν τῆς ἐν ταῖς ὠδῖσι ταλαιπωρίας καὶ κινδύνων ἀπαλλάττειν τὴν θεόν*. The emphasis in the text is on the fact that Molpadia acquired a new name, cultic identity, and, more importantly, healing power only after having perceived Apollo's epiphany.

[19] [Hipp.] *Ep.* 15 Smith. Trans. Smith.

While Asclepius appears to be more concerned with the health and the illness of the individual, his father Apollo is more concerned with the public aspect of health and disease.[20] Apollo, for instance, is often presented as appearing to send or to avert an epidemic plague that befalls the whole city, while Asclepius caters for the healing needs of the individual, manifesting himself in dreams.[21] In the first hundred lines of the *Iliad*, Apollo under the cult epithet Smintheus is credited with both sending and averting a plague.[22] Apollo comes stealthily and angry in his heart into the Achaean camp. The mules and the dogs were the first victims of his fatal arrows, while humans followed next—a very vivid description of the way an epidemic is spread around from the animals of a city to the human inhabitants.[23] For nine days the Achaean camp was ravaged by the missiles of the god; on the tenth an assembly was called. The Achaeans were subdued by both the war and the pestilence.[24] It is as if the original manifestation of the *loimos* and its gradual spreading are equated with Apollo's epiphany and subsequent action. An analogous equation of Apollo's divine advent and the outbreak of the plague is described in the opening lines of *Oedipus Rex*, where Apollo is held responsible for the plague that struck Thebes: *ἐν δ' ὁ πυρφόρος θεὸς | σκήψας ἐλαύνει, λοιμὸς ἔχθιστος, πόλιν*.[25]

In historical times, Apollo was credited once more with the cause and the aversion of the plague that scourged Athens during the Peloponnesian war. The pestilence tormented the Athenians on and off for almost six years (430–426 BC) and killed almost one third of the population. In the same fashion that the Achaeans in Troy tried to appease the god, having experienced the devastating results of his wrath, the Athenians tried to appease Apollo this time by exhuming and removing all the burials from the god's birthplace, Delos. No births or deaths were to take place on the sacred ground from 426 BC onwards. They also revived the great Ionic festival Delia, to commemorate their deliverance from the plague and Apollo's part in their *sōtēria*.[26] Apollo was credited with the aversion of the epidemic, and consequently acquired the cult title Alexikakos.[27]

The same god, enraged with the Milesians, punished them by sending a plague. The aversion of this plague by a certain Branchos, the mythical ancestor of the Branchidae, became the foundation myth (*aition*) of Apollo's temple in Didyma,[28] while Apollo's aversion of the plague of 430 became the *aition* for the foundation of his temple in Bassae in Arcadia, where he was worshipped as Apollo

[20] On Apollo's role as a healer, see Ehrhardt (1989) and Graf (2009, 65–83).

[21] With the possible exception of Aristid. *Or*. 50.9 Keil, where Asclepius and Athena are credited together as the saviours of the populace from the plague that afflicted Smyrna. But then the emphasis in that narrative is not so much on the salvific role of the divine; the whole point is rather to credit Aristides with the salvation of Smyrna. More on the role of Aristides as a healer in the *Hieroi Logoi* in Petridou (2015).

[22] *Il*. 1.46–67. Cf. also *Il*. 5.401, 889: Paean is an independent deity here; in *Il*. 1.473 Paean is related to the cult of Apollo. For *σμίνθος* 'mouse', and *Σμινθεύς* meaning the mouse god see Kirk's commentary ad loc. Mice are often associated with the spreading of the plague. On pollution as disease and purification as salvation see Parker (1983, esp. 281–307) and Kosak (2000).

[23] See Thuc. 2.50.1 for similar description of the spread of the Athenian plague.

[24] *Il*. 1.61: *εἰ δὴ ὁμοῦ πόλεμός τε δαμᾷ καὶ λοιμὸς Ἀχαιούς*.

[25] Soph. *OT* 27–8. Cf. also lines 176 and 191.

[26] Thuc. 3.104.2–6.

[27] Paus. 1.3.4.

[28] Burkert (1985, 147); Call. fr. 194.28–31.

Epikourios, 'the helper'.[29] As mentioned earlier, Apollo and his sister Artemis were entreated to visit the city of Aigialeia, when it was afflicted by an epidemic plague.[30] The Aigialeians sent seven boys and seven girls to the river Sythas to supplicate Apollo and Artemis. The story goes that the gods were persuaded by the youthful suppliants, arrived at the city, and successfully delivered it from the plague. To commemorate the happy occasion, the people of Aigialeia established a festival that included the ritual re-enactment of the supplication of the children, and the arrival of the deities in the city. The place where the gods first arrived became the first temple of Peitho.

Healing remained one of Apollo's characteristic traits in cult despite the fact that Asclepius dominated the medical scene of the fifth and fourth centuries. They operated together in one of the most renowned healing centres of Classical antiquity, Epidaurus. It was to Apollo that the ailing person garlanded with bay offered the preliminary sacrifices at the Epidaurian Asclepieion, while the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas in Epidaurus enjoyed great popularity as well.[31] It is also possible that the principal sanctuary of Epidaurus might have been initially dedicated to Apollo or to Apollo and his son Asclepius together.[32] Asclepius remained dependent on Apollo to such an extent that the Epidaurian *Iamata* (the narratives that to an extent remain our main source of information on healing epiphanies in Classical times) are dedicated to both Asclepius and Apollo; and the same holds true for the famous hymn of Isyllus.[33]

ASCLEPIUS THE DIVINE HEALER, ASCLEPIUS THE DIVINE PHYSICIAN

Before the arrival of Asclepius in Athens, Athena, under the cult title Hygeia, operated in the field of public health.[34] Later on, Hygeia as a separate deity was added to the circle of the newcomer god and imagined to be Asclepius' daughter, a fact that can be interpreted as Asclepius having acquired prophylactic qualities as well as healing ones.[35] Pausanias saw the statues of both Hygeia, the daughter of Asclepius, and Athena Hygeia right next to each other on the acropolis.[36] Athena was also worshipped as Athena Paionia, but under both cult titles she was concerned with the needs of the community rather than those of the individual.[37] However, there is an interesting narrative that relates Athena's epiphany to an individual: a certain Pyrrhos from Athens fell and injured himself whilst in

[29] Burkert (1985, 147); Paus. 8.41.7–9. On the temple of Apollo at Bassae and Apollo's cult epithets, see Cooper (1996).

[30] Paus. 2.7.7–8.

[31] See Edelstein (1998, vol. 2, 186, n. 9) for the cult of Apollo Maleatas in the Asclepieion of Athens.

[32] Garland (1992, 118).

[33] *IG* IV 1^2.128.

[34] Greaf/Langlotz, *Vasen von Acropolis*, II.119, no. 1367, pl. 91 (*ARV*^{2} 1556); *IG* I^3 506; *IG* II/III 334 ed. Minor pars 1 Fasc. 1; see also Plut. *Per*. 13.12–13.

[35] Edelstein (1998, 90ff.).

[36] Paus. 1.23.4. On Athena Hygeia's altar in Acharnae see Paus. 1.31.6.

[37] Paus. (1.2.5; 1.34.3) saw the statue of *Ἀθηνᾶς Παιωνίας*.

Pericles' service.[38] Pericles, as we are told, was most distraught with the idea of losing his most talented and hard-working builder. Fortunately, the goddess manifested herself in Pericles' dream and revealed the treatment for Pyrrhos' injury: *ἡ θεὸς ὄναρ φανεῖσα συνέταξε θεραπείαν*. Pericles put the divine prescription together and healed the man easily. To reciprocate the favour a bronze statue of the goddess was dedicated on the acropolis next to her altar. Plutarch, who preserves the anecdote, presents the divine dream vision as more of a sign of divine favouritism towards Pericles than an act of philanthropy towards the anonymous builder. The builder's name, in fact, came down to us from a dedication on the base of the statue that Pausanias saw standing on the acropolis.[39] The dedication read as follows:

> *Ἀθεναῖοι τεῖ Ἀθεναίαι τεῖ Ὑγιείαι.*
> *Πύρρος ἐποίησεν Ἀθεναῖος.*
>
> The Athenians (dedicate this) to Athena Hygeia.
> Pyrrhos the Athenian made this (votive offering).

The identification between the man named Pyrrhos in our insciption and the anonymous builder who was cured by Athena in Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* is, of course, a matter of conjecture. We can only assume this was the same statue that Plutarch talked about.

Interestingly enough, an Athena that looked like the statue of Pheidias (*effigies* epiphany?) and recited Homer (!) manifested herself to Aelius Aristides in the summer of AD 165. Note that Aristides' apparition has all the concomitant *sēmeia* found in Homeric epiphanies (beauty, magnitude, fragrance):

> Then not much later, Athena appeared carrying her aegis and in beauty, magnitude and whole form she looked like her statue in Athens, the one made by Pheidias (*τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὸ μέγεθος καὶ σύμπαν δὴ σχῆμα οἷα περ ἡ Ἀθήνησιν ἡ Φειδίου*). There was also a fragrance coming from the aegis most pleasant (*ἀπὼζε δὲ καὶ τῆς αἰγίδος ὅτι ἥδιστον*) and very similar to the smell of wax, and she was marvellous in beauty and magnitude (*θαυμαστὴ καὶ αὖτη τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὸ μέγεθος*). She appeared to me alone (*ἐφαίνετο μὲν δὴ μόνῳ στᾶσα καταντικρὺ*), standing right in front of me, and in such a way so as to be most visible. I also pointed her out to those present—two of my friends and my nurse stood there—and I shouted, calling her out by her name, Athena, saying that she stood before me and spoke to me, and I pointed out the aegis. They did not know what they should do (*οἱ δ' οὐκ εἶχον ὅ τι χρήσοιντο*), but they were at a loss (*ἠπόρουν*), and were afraid that I had become delirious, until they saw that my strength was being restored and heard the words I had heard from the goddess.[40]

Aristides does not dream of Athena. He sees her in waking reality, very much in the same manner as Achilles sees the goddess in the first book of the *Iliad*, and starts shouting at the people around him to look at her, to share his epiphanic vision. Note also the repetition of the *kallos* and *megathos* duet, the two most conspicuous concomitant *sēmeia* of the Homeric epiphanies. Athena has also a sweet scent very much like that of Aphrodite in the third book of the *Iliad* and

[38] Plut. *Per.* 13.12–13.
[39] Paus. 1.23.4; *IG* I^3 506 from Attica dated to 433; cf. also *IG* I(2).395; *DAA* 166.
[40] Aristid. *Or.* 48.41 Keil.

Demeter in the homonymous Homeric hymn (see chapter 1). Aristides attempts to anchor his vision on the material details of the goddess's appearance: she has an aegis and she is as beautiful as in her famous Pheidias effigy. Nonetheless, and to Aristides' apparent despair, the bystanders remain at a loss, not perceiving the same vision, and thinking that Aristides was delirious. The reader may suspect here that our famous patient secretly enjoyed this privileged relationship with the divine, who rushed to his sick bed to comfort him with narratives about Homeric heroes like Telemachos and Odysseus. The heroes, Athena seemed to be saying, may have been put to the test, but were eventually delivered from their sufferings with the help of the goddess. Effectively, Aristides is told that he resembles those heroes and should be of good cheer, since he had secured Athena as his *theos pompos*.[41] For our purposes, it is significant that Athena manifests herself at a time of collective crisis (the plague that has befallen the city of Smyrna); and yet she restricts the privilege of witnessing her divine manifestation to one privileged individual.[42]

Unlike Athena, who reserved her medical services for a handful of her protégés, like Pericles and Aristides, Asclepius offered his medical expertise to everyone.[43] Asclepius started his medical career as a local hero from Epidaurus or Trikka (*c*.500 BC).[44] But soon his cult was embraced by Telemachos of Acharnae, either an Athenian who imported the god or an Epidaurian who exported his native deity, who commemorated Asclepius' arrival on a double-sided relief.[45] In the first couple of lines of the fragmentary text we read with Parker:

[41] For Athena as *pompos theos* see also Aristid. *Or*. 38.26 Keil.

[42] Cf. also Aristid. *Or*. 50.9 Keil. She appears in the context of a plague that hit the suburbs and sends most of Aristides' neighbours to seek help in the neighbouring Asclepieia and most notably the Asclepieion in Pergamon. Cf. *Or*. 48.38 Keil: *νόσος δὲ κατέσχε λοιμώδης πάντας σχεδὸν τοὺς προσχώρους*.

[43] This is not to say that Asclepius did not form extremely intimate relationships with his clientele. It is Asclepius with whom Aristides seems to have developed a most personalized affair of powerful interdependence based on gratitude and patronage. Hence the protagonist role of Asclepius in the *Hieroi Logoi*. Asclepius' healing epiphanies seemed to have struck an impression with several powerful individuals from the fourth century onwards, and it is partly due to these close relationships with these individuals that his cult gets dispatched to every corner of the Greek-speaking world. More on this in the next two subsections.

[44] Aston (2004) with bibliography.

[45] Athenian: (Garland 1992, 119); Epidaurian: Parker (1996, 176–7). The monument (a T-shaped structure made of Pentelic marble) has been reconstructed from fourteen fragments, which belong in collections of the National and the Epigraphical Museums in Athens, the British Museum in London, the Museo Civico in Padova, and the Museo Maffeiano in Verona. Some of these fragments appear to be copies of the original monument. Mitropoulou (1975) has assembled a catalogue of most of the fragments, including detailed measurements and photographs. An illustration of the monument as reconstructed by Luigi Beschi appears as Figure 4.2 in Wickkiser (2008, 69). See also (*eadem*, 67–8) for the inscription's text. On the Telemachos monument see also van Straten (1993, 259): 'The two sides of this *amphiglyphon* show the interior and the exterior of the newly founded sanctuary, and on one side there is also an indication of the Asclepieion in Piraeus, whence Asclepius had come to Athens. Telemachos himself, however, is in no way different from any other worshipper on any other votive relief of the same period. In the inscription on the pillar supporting this relief, though it is extremely succinct and matter-of-fact, we may perhaps detect a certain amount of self-confidence and pride. Telemachos declares, and he emphatically repeats it in another inscription, that he was the first to found the sanctuary of Asclepius and Hygieia and the sons and daughters of Asclepius.'

> coming up from Zea (?) during the Great Mysteries he lodged (?) [in the Eleusinion] and summoning a snake (?) from home brought it here on [a wagon] [a reference to Telemachos in an uncertain case follows immediately as part of the same sentence]. At the same time came Health (?). And so this whole shrine was founded in the archonship of Astyphilos.

The god was introduced to the city in the form of a snake on a chariot.[46] The exact date of Asclepius' arrival is known to us thanks to Telemachos' monument: the eighteenth of Boedromion of 420/19 BC. The god arrived in Athens almost immediately after the signing of the Peace of Nikias (421 BC), the peace treaty that allowed Athens to re-establish its diplomatic discourse with Epidaurus.[47] According to our sources, Asclepius arrived first in the harbour of Zea in Piraeus (see the first couple of lines from the Telemachos relief quoted above) and that information ties up with the fact that it was Piraeus that was afflicted by the plague of 430 BC.[48] The plague continued to torture the Athenians up to *c.*426. Mikalson takes the connection between the two historical events, the plague and the introduction of Asclepius' cult in Athens, one step further: he argues that the Athenian attack against Epidaurus during the Peloponnesian war aimed at an appropriation of the healing qualities of the god.[49] His suggestion seems to me rather appealing in view of the failing of the pre-Asclepius healing deities to defend the city against the plague.[50]

Asclepius' mystic epiphanies

On his coming into Athens, Asclepius received a warm and friendly welcome from the priesthood of Demeter and Kore, the '"saviours" of older type', as Parker

[46] The inscription on the Telemachos monument (*IG* II^2 4960a), which tells us of Asclepius' advent in Athens, is fragmentary. In lines 12–15 of Beschi's reconstruction (1967–8), we read that Telemachos summoned a snake from home and brought it in a chariot to Athens. The reading *ΔΡΑ*]*ΚΟΝΤΑ*, though, is not certain. It is Körte's conjecture (*AM* 21, 1896, 316), and it has been contested by Clinton (1994, 20), who prefers to read *ΔΙΑ*]*ΚΟΝΟΝ* (with Beschi). Körte supports his suggestion with the numerous examples of zoomorphic cult dispatchers discussed below (cf. Sikyon, Limera, Halieis, Rome). Clinton's grounds for questioning Körte's reading are not entirely convincing: he claims that a snake from Epidaurus would have had a more prominent position in the text and the name of the city would have been given extra emphasis. See also most recently Aston (2004, 21), who thinks that Clinton et al.'s reading of *ΔΙΑ*]*ΚΟΝΟΝ* 'is not unassailable'. This second reading ('attendant'), though, is of use to Clinton who favours the idea of Asclepius' being introduced in the city in the form of a wooden statue of substantial size. The attendant mentioned above would have been the one appointed to take care of the god's image. The two variants, nevertheless, the statue and the snake, i.e. the anthropomorphic *effigies* and the zoomorphic cult dispatcher, are not contradictory. They can in fact be complementary and could have been combined in introducing Asclepius' authority in such a major city as Athens, perhaps to contest his major divine rivals in the realm of healing, e.g. Athena Hygeia.

[47] Garland (1992, 118).

[48] The incubation scene in Aristophanes' *Wealth* 656–8 takes place by the sea, namely in the Asclepieion of Piraeus.

[49] Mikalson (1984, 220).

[50] On the close correlation of the Athenian plague and the introduction of the Asclepian cult in the city see also Longrigg (2000, 61–3); Nutton (2013, 104–5); Mitchell-Boyask (2008, 105–21, 153–82).

Fig. 3.1. Votive relief from the National Museum of Acropolis (Inv. No. 1332) depicting Asclepius, Demeter, and Kore receiving worshippers (physicians?); dated to *c.* the second half of the fourth century BC.

calls them.[51] A relief from the Athenian Asclepieion (Fig. 3.1) shows the god in the company of the two goddesses approached by a number of worshippers, in all likelihood venerating physicians.[52] An official day was established to celebrate the god's arrival, which was later said to have coincided with his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries, while the newcomer god found temporary shelter in the Eleusinion.[53] Epidauria, the festival that commemorated the god's first arrival in the city, became part of the Great Mysteries.[54] Asclepius' other festival, the

[51] Although initially there may have been some dispute over the site of the god's sanctuary (Parker 1996, 177–81 with bibliography).

[52] *IG* II^2 4359 = *LIMC* s.v. *Asclepius*, 886, no. 313. Venerating physicians: Klöckner (2010), where further discussion of the relief and bibliography.

[53] *IG* IV^2, 4960a; [Arist.] *A.P.* 56.4; Paus. 2.26.8. For a second-century AD version of the same aetiological myth, see Philostr. *VA* 4.18. On the significance of the adoption of Asclepius by the Eleusinian priesthood, see Garland (1992, 124) and Parker (1996, 180), among others.

[54] Clinton (1994). Ritual initiation of Asclepius in the form of his cult statue: Philostr. *VA* 4.18; Paus. 2.26.8; *IG* II^2 3195 with Aleshire (1991, 101–3). The exact nature of the ritual remains obscure. The information regarding the festival largely relies on the second-century BC testimonies. More on this in Melfi (2010, 331–4). Melfi proposes that a theatrical re-enactment of the god's initiation (i.e. an enacted epiphany)—in the manner described in the so-called the Iobacchoi inscription (*IG* II^2 1368; on which see the discussion in chapter 1, 'Enacted epiphany')—would have been the centrepiece of the rite, and that the Athenian theatre of Dionysus might have been put to use for this performance. Melfi (2010, 332) seems to be thinking that the ritual *xenismos* of the god by powerful members of the sociopolitical elite must have predated the idea of the god's ritual initiation into the mysteries, which was ritually modelled on the historical initiation of high-born foreigners like the Roman emperors

Asclepieia (celebrated in Elaphebolion), was part of another prestigious festival of old, that of the Great Dionysia. Both festivals in honour of Asclepius are found to be part of the poliadic aspect of old, reverent, and popular mystery cults. Could this cautious arrangement of the festive calendar point to a closer relation of the very essence of these cults and subsequently to the way that the divine epiphanies take place within their cultic context? No definite answer can be given to this question. However, if we are to believe Aelius Aristides and what he says in *Or.* 23.16 Keil, there seem to have been further structural parallels between the cult of Asclepius and that of Demeter and Kore in Eleusis that may point to some similarities on the level of content:

> For the hearth of Asclepius was established in this part of Asia Minor (sc. in Pergamon). And here firebrands friendly to all men are raised on high by the god, who summons to himself and raises high up the truest light (*καλοῦντός τε ὡς αὐτὸν καὶ μάλα ἀληθινὸν φῶς ἀνίσχοντος*). And neither belonging to a chorus nor sailing together nor having the same teacher is as great a thing as the benefit and profit of being a fellow pilgrim to the temple of Asclepius (*εἰς Ἀσκληπιοῦ τε συμφοιτῆσαι*) and being initiated to the first of the holy rites by the fairest and most perfect torchbearer and leader of the mysteries (*τελεσθῆναι τὰ πρῶτα τῶν ἱερῶν ὑπὸ τῷ καλλίστῳ καὶ τελεωτάτῳ δᾳδούχῳ καὶ μυσταγωγῷ*), to whom every rule of necessity yields. I am myself one of those who have lived not twice but many varied lives through the power of the god, and consequently one of those who think that sickness for this reason is advantageous and who moreover have acquired precious charms in return for which I would not accept all that so-called happiness among men.[55]

This community of fellow *mystai* appears to be tightly bound together by spending time together discussing their illnesses with each other and deciphering their dream visions. Above all, they appear to be tied together by a joint initiation into the highest of the sacred rites (*συμφοιτῆσαι καὶ τελεσθῆναι τὰ πρῶτα τῶν ἱερῶν*). In these sacred *mystēria* Asclepius operates as both the fairest and the most sublime *dadouchos* and *mystagōgos* (*ὑπὸ τῷ καλλίστῳ καὶ τελεωτάτῳ δᾳδούχῳ καὶ μυσταγωγῷ*). This passage is exceptional in exemplifying the exclusive character of the healing experience in the Pergamene Asclepieion. Along with allusions to ritual light, which is of cardinal importance to mystery cults in general (*φρυκτοὶ φίλιοι πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις αἴρονται . . . μάλα ἀληθινὸν φῶς ἀνίσχοντος*),[56] explicit mystic terminology is used to describe the therapeutic experience in the Pergamene Asclepieion as an initiation into first-class *mystēria*, secret rites that alter permanently the initiate's relationship with the world and his relationship with his fellow patients.[57] Notice especially the titles of the sacred officials, which postulate some kind of parallel drawn with the Great Mysteries in Eleusis.

Behr in his 1968 study of Aristides' *Hieroi Logoi* is adamant in his insistence that Asclepius' cult lacked any possible mystic aspect; and in the second volume of his translation of Aristides' *Collected Works* (published in 1986) he insists on the

Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. See also Galli (2001, 65–7) who picks up a similar line of thought when discussing the dedication of a statue of Asclepius as a *mystes* by Herodes Atticus.

[55] Trans. Edelstein [T 402] with slight emendations.

[56] Ritual light in mystery cults: Clinton (2004) on Eleusis; and Seaford (2005, 602–3) on wonderful light in initiation ritual in general.

[57] On Eleusinian mysteric terminology in this passage, see Humbel (1994, 31–2).

metaphorical use of the titles of the Eleusinian officials, which the orator used 'to emphasise his feeling of holiness of the cult'.[58] He does, however, draw the reader's attention to some kind of 'connection' that existed between the Eleusinian and the Pergamene cult, without specifying what kind of connection he means.[59] Of course, Behr is right in pointing out that the close link and comparison between the two cults is a traditional idea, and not Aristides' own. In the second of the pseudo-Hippocratic letters, for example, we find Hippocrates compared to Triptolemos and functioning as a kind of functionary in a mystery cult of character analogous to the Eleusinian cult; the difference, however, is that Hippocrates does not disseminate the crops of Demeter, but the cures invented by Asclepius.[60]

Nonetheless, the possibility that this comparison between the cults points to the close modelling of the Asclepian cult onto the mystery cult of Demeter and Kore in Eleusis cannot be excluded either, precisely because in the Attika of the Classical period, the two cults were closely linked for various reasons, not least political, explored by Benedum and more recently by Wickkiser.[61]

For a start, an official day was established to celebrate Asclepius' arrival, which was later said to have coincided with his initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries, while the newcomer god found temporary shelter in the Eleusinion (*IG* IV^2, 4960a).[62] The Epidauria, the very festival that commemorated the god's first arrival in the city, became part of the Great Mysteries.[63] Moreover, Asclepius' other festival, the Asclepieia (celebrated in Elaphebolion), was part of another prestigious festival of old, that of the Great Dionysia. As seen above, both festivals in honour of Asclepius (the Epidauria and the Asclepieia) are found to be part of the poliadic aspect of old, reverent, and popular mystery cults. Could this cautious arrangement of the festive calendar point to a closer relation of the very essence of these cults and the way their devotees relate to the principal deities? Or was this cautious religious coalition between Asclepius and Demeter simply a clever way to invest 'a merely materialist cult' with greater significance and eschatological preoccupations?[64] Perhaps when Asclepius moved to the Eleusinian sanctuary, he became a bit like Demeter, and likewise, Demeter became a bit like Asclepius, that is she acquired certain therapeutic capacities and a healing dimension, which is especially linked to eye disease and healing.[65] In fact, several testimonies

[58] Behr (1981, 366, n. 11). [59] Cf. also Behr (1986, 149, n. 9).

[60] [Hipp.] *Epist.* 2.22–5, esp.: *Καθαίρει δὲ οὐ θηρίων μὲν γένος, θηριωδῶν δὲ νοσημάτων καὶ ἀγρίων πολλὴν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν, διασπείρων πανταχόθεν, ὥσπερ ὁ Τριπτόλεμος τὰ τῆς Δήμητρος σπέρματα, τὰ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ βοηθήματα.*

[61] Benedum (1986) and Wickkiser (2008).

[62] Cf. also [Aristotle] *Athenian Constitution* 56.4; Pausanias 2.26.8. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 4.18 gives us a second-century AD version of the same aitiological myth. A relief from the Athenian Asclepieion (*IG* II^2 4359 = *LIMC* s.v. *Asclepius*, 886, no. 313) shows the god in the company of the two goddesses approached by a number of worshippers.

[63] Clinton (1993); Parker (2005, 462).

[64] Edelsteins (1998, 127–31) esp. p. 129: 'Asclepius, by allying himself with Demeter, by joining together this world and the other, gave to his worship a significance far beyond that of a merely materialistic healing cult.'

[65] On Demeter's connection to ophthalmological disease and healing see Rubensohn (1895) and Petridou (2013) and (forthcoming).

(epigraphic and literary alike) support the assumption that the two cults remained closely linked up to the Imperial era. An inscription dated to *c.* AD 160, for instance, records common sacrifices to Asclepius, Epione, and the Eleusinian goddesses (*IG* IV^2 1.126: *κοινῇ θῦσαι Ἀσκληπιῷ, Ἠπιόνῃ, Ἐλευσεινίαις*) offered by a certain Marcus Julius Apellas who practiced incubation in the temple of the god in Aegina.

Aristides makes use of the language and the imagery of the Eleusinian Mysteries in a number of his speeches—the bulk of these references and allusions being, as expected, in his *Panathenaikos* (*Or*. 1 Keil) and his *Eleusinios* (*Or*. 22 Keil)—and he is by no means unique in doing so: a plethora of contemporary authors like Dion of Prusa, Plutarch, Lucian, Galen, Maximus of Tyre, and others have also employed mystery language and thematology in their works.[66] However, as Humbel puts it, 'Aristides distinguishes himself from the other authors of his time already by the frequency of the (Eleusinian) mystery imagery, which indicates that this theme served him not as a mere rhetorical ornament. Even when he follows the rhetorical models of the Classical period, he differs from them by a more or less strong rebuilding and redesigning of their templates.'[67]

Nevertheless the strongest indication of a close correlation between mystic epiphanies and Asclepian epiphanies comes from the similar prohibitions which appear to have regulated the process of ritual viewing in both cases. Compare for instance the story of Aeschines, who climbed up a tree and tried to peer over the wall into the abaton in the temple of Asclepius in Epidaurus.[68] Just like many other transgressors who dared to see what is not meant to be seen, he was punished for his curiosity and lost his eyesight. The benevolent god, however, restored his vision after appearing to him in the course of a dream vision Aeschines had while he slept at the sanctuary. Farnell (1925, 244) thought that the relationship between Asclepius and the cult of Eleusis should not be taken further than that of a new deity being admitted by a well-established cult and thus being incorporated into the city religion. Nevertheless, the passages briefly mentioned above surely point to a more profound relation of analogy between the mystery cult of Eleusis and that of the divine newcomer.

More importantly, the intimate contact with the divine healer—perhaps unique to the Asclepian cult or more likely to be attested also in the context of other healing cults—bears resemblance to mystic union of the *mystēs* and his god/goddess, which could only be achieved through mystic initiation. Such an intimate physical interaction is pretty much expected between a patient and his or her physician. Interacting with the healing deity via the medium of a dream and securing a treatment of sorts was the main *desideratum* for those who populated the temples of Asclepius, Heros Iatros, Isis, Sarapis, and other healing deities and heroes. Embarking on such a lengthy and expensive preparatory journey (both

[66] Humbel (1994, 147–89) and Kirchner (2005).

[67] Humbel (1994, 19): 'Von den anderen Autoren seiner Zeit hebt sich Aristides schon durch die Häufigkeit der dem (eleusinischen) Mysterienumfeld entnommenen Bilder ab, ein Indiz dafür, dass ihm dieser Themenkreis nicht als bloße rhetorische Ornamentik diente. Auch wenn er den rhetorischen Vorbildern der klassischen Zeit folgt, unterscheidet er sich von ihnen doch durch eine mehr oder weniger starke Um- und Neugestaltung seiner Vorlagen.'

[68] *IG* IV^2, 1, nos 121–2 A11.

physical and mental) to seek the possibility of a medical encounter with the healing deity may have been enough to justify the urgency with which any given incubant would have savoured the moment when the healing deity finally appears to diagnose or more often to simply prescribe a remedy for his or her ailments.[69] The incubant's pressing need for remedy or relief must certainly have been another important factor.

Asclepius' zoomorphic epiphanies

In Sikyon, almost a decade after the first arrival of the god in Zea, a certain Nicagora led Asclepius' sacred snake on a cart drawn by mules to the god's sanctuary.[70] Another sacred snake is involved in the story of Thersandros of Halieis, which formed the aetiological myth for the introduction of Asclepius' cult in the city of Halieis.[71] Thersandros, like Sostrata from Pherai,[72] left the god's temple in Epidaurus without achieving his initial goal, namely to acquire a vision of the god to cure his consumption. Nevertheless, he was completely unaware of the fact that one of the sacred snakes coiled itself around the axle of the wheels of his wagon and followed Thersandros back home. On their arrival, the snake miraculously cured Thersandros and consequently became the sign of the god's interest in expanding his cult in the city of Halieis. The people of Halieis, having consulted the Delphic oracle, built a temenos to Asclepius and got to keep the sacred snake for future use!

Are we to interpret these sacred snakes as symbols of the god's presence (i.e. *pars pro toto* epiphanies) or as his zoomorphic epiphanies?[73] This is a question that was also addressed in chapter 1 ('Zoomorphic epiphany'). Sacred snakes functioned as a kind of zoomorphic cult dispatcher in the other Greek cities and beyond. Asclepius' cult survived most gracefully the advent of Christianity.[74] As late as the third century AD, Asclepius entered Rome in his zoomorphic guise. A sacred snake was dispatched in a boat from Epidaurus and was received triumphantly in the capital of the Roman Empire in an attempt to trounce the plague that broke the same year (see Fig. 3.2).[75] As Aston puts it very aptly: 'The

[69] On the dangers of the theoric journey, see Rutherford (1995). [70] Paus. 2.10.3.

[71] *IG* IV^2, 1, 121–2, B25. [72] *IG* IV^2, 1, 121–2, B33.

[73] Garland (1992, 122): 'In the present instance we cannot know whether the Athenians regarded the snake as Asclepius' familiar or merely as a symbol of his divine grace or his actual theriomorphic incarnation. Possibly the physician and snake represented complementary images of the healing art. Their intimate partnership is made visibly explicit in a celebrated votive relief from Oropos in northeast Attica which depicts the hero Amphiaraos tending the dedicant's shoulder just as a real physician would do, while a snake licks the affected part as the same dedicant sleeps.'

[74] The features we have from our sources are quite impressive: *c.*320 Asclepieia are spread all over the Graeco-Roman world by the second century AD. This line of inquiry is most expertly explored by Sfameni Gasparro (2008).

[75] Val. Max. 1.8.2; Ov. *Met.* 15.626–744. Fig. 3.2 depicts Tiber reclining surrounded by the water of the river. He raises his right hand to salute Asclepius, who arrives as a snake in a galley. More on this medallion in Penn (1994, 36, fig. 25). The obverse depicts the head of Antoninus Pius. More on the arrival of Asclepius in Rome in idem, 36–9. The island is variously known as Insula Tiburina, Insula Aesculapii, Insula Serpentis Epidauri. Later a church in honour of St Bartolomeo was built on the island, in all likelihood on the very spot of the ancient temple.

Fig. 3.2. Tiber welcomes Asclepius in the form of a snake. Bronze medallion of Antoninus Pius (138–161 AD), Rome. AE 42.94 g. Obverse: ANTONINVS AVG PIVS – PP TR P COS III IMP II Laureate head. Reverse: Galley emerging from a two-arched bridge over the Tiber, on the prow, serpent erect; on the r., river god Tiber, nude, seated l., holding reed in his l. hand, globe(?) on his extended r. hand; above, three buildings on rocky ground; below, AESCVLAPIVS.

myths of arrival were a means of dealing with Asclepius' unusually "place-specific" quality: in the context of a very rapid growth in the range and popularity of his cult, they allowed more sites to have a share of his (originally exclusive) presence, after that presence had been claimed with some finality, it seems, by Epidaurus.'[76]

Indeed, there is evidence for a large number of these sacred snakes along with other sacred animals (e.g. dogs and horses) that populate the temples of Asclepius.[77] Are they all to be conceived of as zoomorphic manifestations of the god? In all probability, such a question would not have occurred to the visiting worshippers and pilgrims at the time. Whether we regard them today as symbols of the god or his actual zoomorphic manifestations, these snakes were, for their contemporary audience, signifiers of the god's presence. Compare here the text from the seventeenth cure from the Epidaurian *Iamata* (*IG* IV^2 1, nos 121–2, A17):

(XVII) *ἀνὴρ δάκτυλον ἰάθη ὑπὸ ὄφιος· οὗτος τὸν τοῦ ποδὸς δάκτυλον ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγρίου ἕλκεος δεινῶς διακείμενος μεθάμερα ὑπὸ τῶν θεραπόντων ἐξενειχθεὶς ἐπὶ ἑδράματός τινος καθῖζε· ὕπνου δέ νιν λαβόντος ἐν τούτωι δράκων ἐκ τοῦ ἀβάτου ἐξελθὼν τὸν δάκτυλον ἰάσατο τᾶι γλώσσαι καὶ τοῦτο ποιήσας εἰς τὸ ἄβατον ἀνεχώρησε πάλιν. ἐξεγερθεὶς δὲ ὡς ἦς ὑγιής, ἔφα ὄψιν ἰδεῖν, δοκεῖν νεανίσκον εὐπρεπῆ τὰμ μορφὰν ἐπὶ τὸν δάκτυλον ἐπιπῆν φάρμακον.*

[76] Aston (2004, 22). Cf. also Strabo 8.6.15.

[77] All the references are from Herzog (1931): dogs: nos 20 and 26; horses of Asclepius' chariot in no. 38; snake: no. 33; snake and god: nos 37, 42.

> A man's toe was healed by a snake. He was in a terrible condition from a malignant ulceration on his toe. During the day he was carried out of the Abaton by the servants and was sitting on a seat. He fell asleep, and then a snake came out of the Abaton and healed the toe with his tongue; and when it had done this it went back into the Abaton again. When the man woke up, he was well and he said he had seen a vision: it seemed to him that a good-looking young man had sprinkled a drug over his toe.[78]

What we have here is a variation of what has been termed by Hanson as a 'double dream-vision report': 'this is a narrative in which two characters each have a dream or vision.[79] What is seen and/or heard in each of these dreams or visions can be identical, similar, or quite different. But the paired dreams will in some way be connected such that they produce what may be called a "circumstance of mutuality" between the two dreamers.' The patient himself perceived the god as a good-looking youth who treated his ulcerous toe with a drug of some sort, while the bystanders (or rather the omniscient third-person narrator) saw a snake coming out of the *abaton* and licking the man's toe. None of these versions of the same dream vision is more significant or more 'real' than the other. The images of Asclepius the physician and that of the god's sacred snake are more than complementary; they are two sides of the same coin. Herzog has paralleled this narrative with a celebrated votive relief from Oropos, which on the far right depicts the healing hero Amphiaraos tending Archinos' (the dedicant's) shoulder, while on the left a snake licks the affected part as the same dedicant sleeps.[80]

IS THERE SUCH THING AS A PARADIGMATIC HEALING INCUBATION?

This intimate relationship between the anthropomorphic and the zoomorphic healing deity, or perhaps between the divine physician and his reptile familiar, is also evident in a narrative from Aristophanes' *Wealth* (633–747), where Carion relates to his wife the treatment the god Plutus received from Asclepius at the temple of the god in Piraeus. Elsewhere I have commented in detail on this passage, but for now it suffices to note that in the lines quoted above Carion witnesses a synergy of the healing power of the divine doctor and those of his sacred snakes.[81]

Aristophanes' *Wealth* along with Aelius Aristides' *Hieroi Logoi* (47–52 Keil) and Plautus' *Curculio* (I, 1.61–2; II, 1.216–22, 273) contain perhaps some of the most extensive literary accounts of Asclepius' epiphanies as a means to diagnose and treat a disease.[82] The most informative epigraphic records, however, are from Epidaurus, Athens, Rome, Pergamon, and Lebena.[83] In Epidaurus, in particular,

[78] Trans. LiDonnici.

[79] Hanson (1980, 1414). Cf. also *P.Oxy.* XI.1381, 9–145.

[80] Herzog (1931, 14, no. 17); van Straten (1976, 36, fig. 10); and Petridou (2015b).

[81] Petridou (2015a).

[82] Plautus' testimony is very important because he follows a Greek original of the third century. On Asclepius and temple medicine in Aelius Aristides, see Horstmanshoff (2004, 325–41).

[83] Nutton (2013, 109); Melfi (2007a) and (2007b).

we find lengthy accounts of the diagnostic and healing process followed there, which often consisted in lengthy descriptions of the god's divine epiphanies. These are the so-called Epidaurian *Iamata*.[84] As LiDonnici (1995, 40) rightly argues, it is naïve to treat the Epidaurian *Iamata* as the creations of pious patients. They are mainly the product of the Epidaurian priesthood's careful collection, arrangement, and adaptation of a large variety of source material, which ranges from individual narrative and pictorial votives to oral tradition attached to temple features and state-sponsored inscriptions. The same holds true of the inscriptions from Athens, Rome, and Lebena.[85]

None of these literary or epigraphic sources provides us with an exhaustive description of a 'paradigmatic healing incubation', in the sense that they all include elements that must have been particular to the time and the place the healing took place. Nevertheless, they all more or less describe a phenomenon called incubation (*κατάκλισις* or *ἐνκοίμησις* in Greek), which could be briefly described as follows: the patient sleeps in a temple or other sacred precinct in order either to be healed by the healing deity of the sanctuary on the spot, or to obtain a remedy for subsequent healing. Both the healing and the remedy for subsequent healing are administered in a dream vision (*ὄνειρος*, *ὄναρ*, *ἐνύπνιον*, *ὅραμα*, *φάσμα*, *φάντασμα*, *ὀπτασία*, *ὅρασις*, *κτλ.*).[86]

Consequently, it might be worth attempting to give a rough outline of the whole process: in some cases, it was the patient himself that had to sleep in the temple; alternatively we get reports of relatives or close friends who practised incubation on behalf of the afflicted. See, for instance, the case of Arata from Lacedaemon, who suffered from dropsy. It was Arata's mother who slept in the temple of the god and dreamt of the god chopping off her daughter's head and successfully treating the disease. When she came back to Lacedaemon, she found out that Arata had had the same dream:

(XXI) Ἀράτα [Λά]καινα ὕδρωπ[α. ὑπ]ὲρ ταύτας ἁ μάτηρ ἐνεκάθευδεν ἐλ Λακεδαίμονι ἔσσα[ς] καὶ ἐνύπνιον [ὁ]ρῆι· ἐδόκει τᾶς θυγατρός οὑ τὸν θεὸν ἀποταμόντα τὰν κ[ε]φαλὰν τὸ σῶμα κραμάσαι κάτω τὸν τράχαλον ἔχον· ὡς δ' ἐξερρύα συχνὸν ὑγρ[ό]ν, καταλύσαντα τὸ σῶμα τὰν κεφαλὰν πάλιν ἐπιθέμεν ἐπὶ τὸν αὐχένα· ἰδο[ὐ]σα δὲ τὸ ἐνύπνιον τοῦτο ἀγχωρήσασα εἰς Λακεδαίμονα καταλαμβάνε[ι τ]ὰν θυγατέρα ὑγιαίνουσαν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐνύπνιον ὡρακυῖαν. 5

Arata of Lacedaemon, dropsy. For her sake, her mother slept here, while she remained in Lacedaemon, and she saw a dream. It seemed to her the god cut off the head of her daughter and hung the body neck downwards. After much fluid had run out, he untied the body and put the head back on the neck. Having seen this dream she returned to

[84] On which see the recent discussion by Pearcy (2013).

[85] Chaniotis (1995, 323).

[86] More on the terminology of the dream vision in Hanson (1980, 1407–9) and Renberg (forthcoming). On incubation see Herzog (1931), van Straten (1976), Hanson (1980), LiDonnici (1995), Edelstein and Edelstein (1998), Hart (2000), Holowchak (2001a), Lloyd (2003), Nutton (2013), Petsalis-Diomidis (2006) and (2010), Renberg (2010a) and (2010b), and Harris (2009). The 'grammar' of incubation is well demonstrated in votive reliefs depicting scenes of incubation. More on this issue in van Straten (1981, 63–146). Cf. also Petridou (forthcoming). For a psychological interpretation of the divine epiphany and its therapeutic role in the Asclepieia of the ancient Mediterranean, see Cilliers and Retief (2013).

Lacedaemon and found on her arrival that her daughter was well and that she had seen the same dream.[87]

Whoever came in quest of a divine manifestation had to bathe and perform sacrifices to Asclepius and other deities that were thought of as facilitating the dream visions, such as Hermes, the bringer of dreams.[88] There is no decisive evidence about abstinence from certain kinds of food and drink, as rightly maintained by the Edelsteins.[89] When night came, they would have to enter the temple or the special halls where incubation was practised (*ἐνκοιμητήριον*). There they would sleep and wait for a healing epiphany.

The lights of the temple must have been burning in the places where the patients were gathered, but they would all have been extinguished before the god manifested himself. Compare here the analogous sequence of events in Carion's account of Plautus being healed by Asclepius.[90] Darkness, strongly associated with sleep and dreaming, facilitated the god's divine manifestation. It is important that the god received his clientele on a daily basis, unlike the other gods whose temples were open only on certain sacred calendar days. Asclepius would potentially reveal his godhead to anyone who would go to so much trouble as to sleep in his temple having performed the preparatory bathing and sacrifices.[91] Or almost everyone . . .

Complaints about Asclepius' misdemeanours

In a passage from Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* (1.9) we read about a young Assyrian man who made scornful remarks about not having received any healing visions, despite the fact that he came to the temple of the god and practised incubation. At the same time, though, he did not make an effort to cut down on his luxurious and extravagant way of life. That was exactly why Asclepius did not pay a visit to the youth's dreams: *ἠμελεῖτο δὴ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ διὰ ταῦτα, καὶ οὐδὲ ὄναρ αὐτῷ ἐφοίτα*. The god overheard his criticism and revealed himself to the youth (*ἐπιμεμφομένῳ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπιστὰς ὁ θεός*)—it is not clear whether in waking reality or in his dreams: the formulaic *epistas* plus dative of person points to the latter—advising him to befriend Apollonius and consult him on the matter.[92] Apollonius reproached the young man for uttering blasphemous

[87] *IG* IV^2, 1, nos 121–2, B21. Trans. LiDonnici.

[88] More on this topic in Parker (1996, 182).

[89] Edelstein and Edelstein (1998, 148–9).

[90] Ar. *Pl.* 649–71.

[91] Edelstein and Edelstein (1998, 150).

[92] The formulaic expressions used to describe Asclepius' divine manifestations vary: *ἐπιστάντος δὲ αὐτῷ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ καὶ προειπόντος* Philost. *VS* I, 25,4; *ἐπιστάς ἐναργῶς IG* IV^2, 1, 127 (224 AD); *ὁ δ' αὐτῷ φανεὶς* Orib. *Coll. Med.* XLV 30, 10–14; *Προσιόντος γὰρ αὐτοῦ μέγα πάνυ | ἀπέπαρδον·* Ar. *Pl.* 698–9; *ἐπιφανέντα [τ]ον θεὸν IG*, IV^2 1, 121–2, no. 3; *ὁ τοίνυν θεὸς ἀφικνεῖται* Ael. *NA* 9, 33; *οὐκ ἐπιδαμοῦντος IG* IV^2, 1, 121–2, no. 23. The formula *epistas* plus dative of person is used to describe the manifestation of a certain deity or of the *oneiros* figure in a dream context in general. Cf. *Il.* 2.56–9: *θεῖός μοι ἐνύπνιον ἦλθεν ὄνειρος | ἀμβροσίην διὰ νύκτα· μάλιστα δὲ Νέστορι δίῳ | εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε φυήν τ' ἄγχιστα ἐώκει· | στῆ δ' ἄρ' ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς καί με πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν*; 10.497–8: *κακὸν γὰρ ὄναρ κεφαλῆφιν ἐπέστη | τὴν νύκτ' Οἰνείδαο πάϊς διὰ μῆτιν Ἀθήνης*; *Od.* 4.803–4: *στῆ δ' ἄρ' ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς καί μιν πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν· / 'εὕδεις, Πηνελόπεια, φίλον τετιημένη ἦτορ'*. The same formula appears in all

words and explained that the god reveals himself to those who crave healing (*τοῖς γὰρ βουλομένοις δίδωσι*), not to those who undermine their own health. Asclepius, the divine healer, seems to manifest himself only to those who make an effort to actively improve their lifestyle and to follow the prescribed regimen.

Nevertheless, the most frequent kind of criticism Asclepius was faced with was related to the god's 'multilocality' and his absence at the moment of need from one specific sanctuary due to his obligation to visit other patients in a different healing location. Indicative are, for instance, the complaints expressed by Themistius, the fourth-century AD philosopher in the twenty-seventh of his private orations entitled 'On the Need to Give Thought'.[93] Themistius reacted against the idea of Asclepius not being present in the local temple and the patient having to travel to the most prestigious Asclepieia of Epidaurus and Tricca to consult him. Similarly, in one of the Epidaurian *Iamata*, we learn about a certain Aristagora who having suffered from tapeworm failed to encounter Asclepius in her sleep in his sanctuary in Troizen, because the god 'was out of town' (*οὐκ ἐπιδαμοῦντος*) attending his clientele at his temple in Epidaurus (*ἀλλ' ἐν Ἐπιδαύρῳ ἐόντος*).[94] Oblivious to the god's absence, Asclepius' sons proceeded with chopping off Aristagora's head and would have failed to put it back, if the god hadn't come back from Epidaurus to Troizen (*ὁ θεός ἵκων ἐξ Ἐπιδαύρου*). When the god returned from Epidaurus he reattached the head, cut open her belly, removed the tapeworm, and stitched her up. This reference to the sons of Asclepius may well be to the secular doctors, collectively known as the Asclepiadae, who were associated with the temple (on which see Parker 1996, 177). If this is so, one may also argue that the passage neatly subordinates the prescriptive voice of secular medicine of the fourth century to the authority of the divine healer (more on the dynamic relationship between secular and temple medicine from the fourth century BC up to the Imperial era below).

Similar delinquencies were not unknown even in Epidaurus, as we can conclude from Aelian's account of a woman, who while suffering from tapeworm as well, came to the temple of the god to receive treatment.[95] Just as in Aristagora's case in Troizen, the god happened to be absent (*οὐ παρῆν ὁ θεός*). In her dream, the overconfident helpers of the god decapitated her and one of them pulled out the tapeworm. He could not, however, reattach her head and the woman died. Once the god returned to Epidaurus, he put the woman's head back in its place and raised her from the dead!

Media of transmission: dreams or waking reality?

The incubant would normally see the god in his sleep or in an interstitial state between sleep and waking. Incubation was, indeed, the predominant technique of acquiring healing epiphanies. Asclepius is strongly associated with dreams and

three of the epiphanic narratives preserved in the Lindian Anagraphe (*Syll.*³ 725): *καθ' ὃν δὴ χρόνον ἁ μὲν θεὸς ἐνὶ τῶν ἀρ- | χόντων ἐπιστᾶσα καθ' ὕπνον παρεκάλει* (ll. 13–14); *ἁ θεὸς ἐπιστᾶσα τῶι | ἱερεῖ καθ' ὕπνον ποτέταξε ἡσυχίαν* (ll. 68–9); *ἐπιστᾶσαν αὐτῶι | καθ' ὕπνον τὰν θεὸν ποτιτάσσειν ἀπαγ- | γεῖλαι ἐνὶ τῶν πρυτανίων Ἀναξιπόλει* (ll. 98–100).

[93] Them. *Or.* 27.333d with Penella (2000, 164–73).

[94] *IG* IV² 1, nos 121–2, B23.

[95] *NA* 9.33.

dreaming. As stated above, Asclepius revealed himself primarily in dreams during the night. However, there are a few reports of dream visions of Asclepius which took place during daytime, such as those reported by Libanius in his *Autobiography* (143): 'Out of the three dream visions I had of the god, two took place at noontime' (*τρισὶ δ' ἐνυπνίοις ὁ θεός, ὧν τὼ δύο μεθημερινώ*). Philostratos (*VS* 568) informs us of yet another sophist named Antiochos, who was said to have spent many nights in the temple of the god not only on account of the divine prescriptive dreams, but also for the sake of 'all the intercourse there is between those who were awake and converse with one another, for in his case the god used to converse with him while awake'. Epiphanic revelations in the course of a dream prescribing the appropriate remedy and course of action are at the heart of temple medicine practised in the name of the god, and even epitomized the medical art per se according to Iamblichus (*On the Mysteries* 3.3):

> *Οὕτως ἐν Ἀσκληπιοῦ μὲν τὰ νοσήματα τοῖς θείοις ὀνείροις παύεται· διὰ δὲ τὴν τάξιν τῶν νύκτωρ ἐπιφανειῶν ἡ ἰατρικὴ τέχνη συνέστη ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν ὀνειράτων.*
>
> Thus, in the temples of Asclepius diseases come to an end by means of divine dreams; and, because of the order of the nocturnal epiphanies, the medical art consists of sacred dream visions.

To be sure, dreams used as diagnostic tools were not unique in the cult of Asclepius. On the contrary, dream diagnosis was known to and practised by the author of the Hippocratic *Regimen* (cf. especially book 4), Galen or pseudo-Galen (if we are to judge from his work *On Diagnosis from Dreams*), and Rufus, the Ephesian physician and contemporary of Galen (compare, for instance, the emphasis placed on diagnostic dreams and their interpretation in his *Medical Questions*), as rightly argued by Holowchack.[96] What is unique in Asclepius' cult is that dreams become not simply the diagnostic, but also the therapeutic, means of treating an illness.

Sometimes it is not clear at all to the perceiver whether the god appears in a dream or a waking vision. In these cases the god is described as appearing halfway between sleep and waking (*αὐτὸς ἥκοι καὶ μέσως ἔχειν ὕπνου καὶ ἐγρηγόρσεως*), as, for instance, in the case of Aelius Aristides who was seeking remedy for his condition at the Asclepieion of Pergamon (48.32 Keil). In another Asclepian epiphany, reported this time by Pausanias, the god appears originally in something that feels like a dream but turns out to be something much more complicated and eerie.[97] The story goes that Asclepius appeared to the poetess Anyte and ordered her to deliver his written message to Phalysius of Naupactus, who was blind. Initially, Anyte thought that the god revealed his will in a dream, but later on and judging from the sealed tablet she found in her hands, she concluded that the god had appeared in waking reality: *τοῦτο ἐφάνη τῇ γυναικὶ ὄψις ὀνείρατος, ὕπαρ μέντοι ἦν αὐτίκα· καὶ εὗρέ τε ἐν ταῖς χερσὶ ταῖς αὑτῆς σεσημασμένην δέλτον*. Phalysius took the divine letter in his hands and as soon as he opened the seal, he

[96] Holowchack (2001b, 382–99). On dreams as diagnostic tools in the Hippocratic and the Galenic corpora, see Hulskamp (2013) and Pearcy (2013).

[97] Paus. 10.38.13 with Platt (2011, 290–2). A close parallel to this 'Himmelsbriefe' (lit. 'heaven's letter') can be found in Aristid. *Or.* 47.78 Keil.

regained his vision. The story became the aetiological myth behind the introduction of the god's cult in Naupactus.[98]

To be fair, we do occasionally come across reports of Asclepius manifesting himself in waking reality, but, admittedly, these cases occur only very rarely. In the passage from Aristophanes' *Wealth* (633–747) discussed above, for instance, Carion is not asleep when the god approaches him and blind Plutus. Another instance of the god appearing in waking reality is that of Sostrata from Pherai, who, having experienced a false pregnancy slept in the Epidaurian Asclepieion without, however, any fruitful results:[99]

vac. (XXV) Σωστράτα Φεραί[α παρ]-
εκύησε. α[ὖ]τα ἐμ παντὶ ἐοῦσα φοράδαν εἰς τὸ ἱαρὸν ἀφικομένα ἐνε[κά]-
θευδε. ὡς δὲ οὐθὲν ἐνύπνιον ἐναργ[ὲ]ς ἑώρη, πάλιν οἴκαδε ἀπεκομίζ[ε]-
το. μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο συμβολῆσαί τις περὶ Κόρνους αὐτâι καὶ τοῖς ἑ[πομέ]- 30
νοις ἔδοξε τὰν ὄψιν εὐπρεπὴς ἀνήρ, ὃς πυθόμενος παρ᾽ αὐτῶν τ[ὰς δυσπρα]-
ξίας τὰς αὐτῶν ἐκελήσατο θέμεν τὰν κλίναν, ἐφ᾽ ἃς τὰν Σωστρ[άταν ἔφε]-
ρον. ἔπειτα τὰγ κοιλίαν αὐτâς ἀνσχίσας ἐξαιρεῖ πλῆθος ζ[ωϋφίων πάμ]-
πολυ, [δύ]ε ποδανιπτῆρας· συνράψας δὲ τὰ[ν γ]αστέρα καὶ ποήσας ὑ[γιῆ]
τὰν γυναῖκα τάν τε παρουσίαν τὰν αὐτο[ῦ π]αρενεφάνιξε ὁ Ἀσκλαπιὸς 35
καὶ ἴατρα ἐκέλετο ἀπ[ο]πέμπειν εἰς Ἐπί[δα]υρ[ον. *vac.*]

Sostrata of Pherai, false pregnancy. This woman, borne entirely on a litter, arrived at the sanctuary and slept there. But since she saw no clear dream she was carried homeward again. Later, around Kornoi, she and her attendants met up with someone, in appearance a handsome man, who, when he heard from them their bad luck, told them to set down the couch on which Sostrata was borne. Then he cut open her belly and took out lots and lots of creatures—two footbasins full. When he had sewn up her stomach and made the woman well, Asclepius revealed his presence to her and ordered her to send offerings to Epidaurus.[100]

On their way home, the woman and her attendants met a handsome man, who having learnt all about her misfortunes, cut the belly of the afflicted lady wide open and set her free from the various creatures that she was carrying within. When he had sewn up her stomach and made the woman well, Asclepius revealed his identity (τάν τε παρουσίαν τὰν αὐτο[ῦ π]αρενεφάνιξε ὁ Ἀσκλαπιὸς) and ordered her to send his medical fee (ἴατρα) to Epidaurus.[101] Asclepius reveals his identity only after the whole operation was brought successfully to completion and in a sense his epiphany coincides with the healing of the woman. Does that qualify us to claim that in this particular case the healing is objectified as the god's divine manifestation? It is most significant that the corporeal manifestation of the god is

[98] Anyte's vision belongs to what Dodds (1951, 102–3) calls 'rapport dreams'. Rapport dreams are those exceptional cases of dream visions in which the deity leaves the dreamer with an unquestionable token of his/her visitation, such as the written tablet in our narrative.

[99] *IG* IV^2, 1, nos 121–2, B25, with Herzog (1931, 18).

[100] Trans. LiDonnici.

[101] On this inscription and the meaning of the term *iatra* see Prêtre and Charlier (2009, 36–40, 76). On the medical fee of the physician and its impact on the patient–physician relationship in the Hippocratic corpus, see Ecca, G., *Praecepta*: Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar (diss. Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, 2014); and *eadem*, 'The *mistharion* of the Physician', 'A Case of Self-Representation in *Praecepta*' (forthcoming).

presented as a belated result of the woman's practising incubation in the temple earlier.

This story, along with other similar ones (originally having sprung from a votive relief?), must have been carefully and craftily reworked by the priestly personnel in their attempt to advertise the possibility that prima facie unsuccessful *katakliseis* may prove to be fruitful later on. What we read in the hymn to Asclepius as found on an inscription from the Asclepieion in Pergamon is also relevant here: '. . . Saviour . . . summoned during night and day, you came to me when I was troubled in my heart by painful illness.'[102] Consequently, the Edelsteins (1998, 150, n. 22) are not entirely right when they claim that Asclepius manifested his godhead only in night-time dreams in a healing context. To be fair they do mention Sostrata's example, but Carion's account in Aristophanes' *Wealth* is dismissed as poetic licence. Dreams have undoubtedly been the medium par excellence for healing epiphanies, but waking reality as a most rare medium of Asclepius' epiphanies should not be excluded. Whether in dreams or in waking reality, it is significant that Asclepius' manifestations to the afflicted are taken to be the tangible proof of the god's power and divinity.

SYNOPSIS

If we put Asclepius' zoomorphic epiphanies, so popular with his introduction myths, to one side, in the majority of our literary and epigraphic sources (as well as in Asclepius' most popular artistic representations), the god manifested himself in the form of a bearded man of mature age. His standard iconographical identity was that of a paternal figure resembling Zeus in everything apart from his staff with the coiled snake, or snakes, which appear to accompany him. There are, of course, a small number of testimonies where Asclepius manifested himself in the likeness of a handsome young man (*τὰν ὄψιν εὐπρεπὴς ἀνήρ*), as in his epiphany to Sostrata (B25, discussed above). Similarly the man of Epidaurian cure A17 who had his sore toe healed by a snake, claimed, when he woke, that he dreamt of a youth with a beautiful appearance (*νεανίσκον εὐπρεπῆ τὰμ μορφάν*) putting some drug on his toe. In Sostrata's case, in particular, the handsome man is explicitly identified as the god Asclepius himself.

There are, in fact, a whole range of narratives from the Epidaurian *Iamata* which lay emphasis on the beauty and the youth of the dream figure that the patient encounters, and which seem to hint at having sex with the god for healing purposes.[103] In one of these, a man who had a stone in his penis dreamt of having sex with a beautiful boy (perhaps an anthropomorphic manifestation of the god). He had an orgasm in his sleep and ejected the stone. In another, a woman called Andromache dreamt that a beautiful boy uncovered her, and that the god touched her with his hand. 'As a result a son was born to Andromache by Arybbas.' LiDonnici rightly maintains that the stress on the baby's paternity aims at eliminating any possibility that Asclepius was the father.[104] In a third narrative,

[102] Edelstein and Edelstein (1998, T 596).
[103] *IG* IV2, I, nos 121–2, A14, B11, B19.
[104] LiDonnici (1989, 109, n. 28).

a childless woman slept at the temple of the god and dreamt that 'a snake [in all likelihood a zoomorphic manifestation of the god] lay on her belly and as a result five children were born to her'. In all three cases, the sexual contact with these otherworldly beings takes place in the course of a dream.[105]

Alternatively, the god manifested himself in the form of his statue. This was the case, for instance, with Domninos, who, having woken up, spoke to the statue of the god and even had a brief argument with it concerning the prescribed course of action.[106] Aelius Aristides is also reported to have conversed with the god in the form of his cult statue.[107]

The god in his anthropomorphic and statuary manifestations was seen laughing and even joking with his patients.[108] The exception that proves the rule is Asclepius' frightening manifestation to the author of the Hippocratic *Epistulae* (15.9 Smith), where the god did not appear as a benign and calm paternal figure, but in a lively and rather fearsome posture in the company of enormous snakes.[109] More importantly, in the majority of our sources, the god was seen cutting his patients' veins, heads, stomachs, etc.; he was seen applying remedies on their skin and limbs, or simply consulting them on the appropriate course of action. In other words, Asclepius often acquired the form of a physician, and even his cures, though thought of as miraculous, followed the pattern of rational and empirical medicine.[110] In fact, many students of the history of ancient medicine would agree that the god's close cooperation with the developing art of medicine was one of the most significant reasons for the popularity of Asclepius' cult.[111]

On the other hand, to think of Asclepius' cult exclusively in terms of medical techniques, treatments, and procedures which more or less find parallels with contemporary medicinal thought and practice would be to miss the point entirely. Asclepius' healing epiphanies carry the unmistakable hallmarks of a divine revelation and often, as seen above, the signs of an initiatory experience, at least as far as Aristides was concerned. No matter how hard it is to think beyond the perceptual filters of an age in which the human physician and his attendants are the epicentre of the healing process, one must try not to forget that Asclepius was both a divine healer and a divine physician, both a god and a doctor.

[105] In all three cases, the sexual contact with these otherworldly beings takes place in the course of a dream. More on erotic epiphanies in chapter 5 and Petridou (forthcoming).

[106] Suda II 127, 29; II 52, 18 s.vv. *Δομνῖνος* and *διαγκωνισάμενος* (chapter 1, '*Effigies* epiphany').

[107] Arist. *Or*. 50.50–1 Keil (chapter 1, '*Effigies* epiphany'). On Asclepius manifesting his godhead in the course of dreams in general, see also Artem. *Oneir*. 2.37. On illness and healing in Artemidorus, see Csepregi (2013).

[108] Laughing: *Ar. Pl.* 723; joking: *IG* IV^2 1, nos 121–2, A8.

[109] Cf. Ar. *Pl.* 733–4.

[110] Edelstein and Edelstein (1998, 345). Cf. however what Horstmanshoff (2004, 278) remarks on medicinal practice in the Antonine era: 'Medicine in the Imperial Age was never "scientific", but tried to reconcile the religious tradition and the many ages of Hippocraticism.' This is Manfred Horstmanshoff's comment on Edelstein's remark that by the second century AD 'the god has learnt medicine'. Cf. also Behr (1986, 36–40) and Cox-Miller (1998, 114).

[111] Robert Parker (1996, 184) puts the issue very nicely. On the cooperation of secular and religious healing and their practitioners see also Holowchack (2001b, 386); Oberhelman (2013); and Nutton (2013, 110–14).

4

Dei in remotis

Epiphany, solitude, and divine inspiration

Bacchum in remotis carmina rupibus
vidi docentem—credite posteri—
Nymphasque discentis et auris
capripedum Satyrorum acutas.

I saw Bacchus in remote rocks teaching poetry—posterity you must believe me—and the Nymphs learning it and the attentive ears of the goat-hoofed Satyrs.

Horace, *Odes* II.19.1–4

In the previous two chapters we discussed epiphanies that take place when the individual or the community is faced with critical situations, such those of war, siege, drought, famine, and illness. As far as location is concerned, warfare epiphanies usually take place either on the actual battlefields or in the vicinity of some remote sanctuary or temple, whilst disease epiphanies usually (but not exclusively) occur in the temples or sacred spaces (such as sacred caves) of the healing deity.[1] The present chapter focuses on epiphanies that occur not in civic space, but in dangerous and marginal landscapes, such as caves, mountains, and remote coastal areas. These epiphanies are most commonly perceived by individuals whose activities are closely associated with these landscapes: shepherds, goatherds, hunters, beekeepers, fishermen, and, somewhat surprisingly, poets and prophets, who are also said to receive their divine inspiration through epiphanies that occur in analogous settings.

On the Greek geophysical map, civic space and cultivated land seem remarkably fragmented. Civic territories comprise larger or smaller regions bordered by craggy mountains and water. The way to pass from one civic territory to another is by travelling or by dreaming about being transferred to a different place.[2] Travelling is by definition an interstitial activity; travelling means being in between places, going from one to the other, and thus being nowhere in particular. Consequently, epiphanic revelations that take place in a 'journey' context will

[1] Incubation, of course, was also practised in caves dedicated to Pan, the Nymphs, the Horai, the Charites, and other deities related to the Greek countryside. More on this topic in Larson (2001, 91–121; 226–67).

[2] I thank Richard Seaford for pointing out to me that another way of going to places is dreaming about them. Dreaming is, of course, yet another interstitial activity, of which more shortly.

also be discussed here, since travelling is yet another activity that takes place on mountains or on the sea and is in general associated with the landscapes in question. The following section will hopefully make clear why these landscapes, being of a complex and ambiguous nature, are prone to divine manifestations.

EPIPHANIC LANDSCAPES AND INTERSTITIALITY

Our discussion should start by mapping out the special topographical features that transform an ordinary land into an epiphanic one. Mountain, forests, caves, and, of course, the rivers and the sea all function as some kind of natural boundary between civic territories, which simultaneously divides and unites them. In ancient narratives, all these topographical features are seen as carrying a certain ambiguity, as being in between. Between the centre and the periphery, between the organized civic life and the asocial or nomadic way of living, above all between wilderness and civilization.[3]

The rocky Greek *oros*, in particular, is a *locus mirabilis*: it is where sociopolitical reversals take place and where opposites unite: female and male, wild and civilized, men and beasts, human and divine, divine and animalistic. It comes as no surprise that epiphanies happen most commonly on the mountains. Greek caves function, to an extent, like mountains.[4] They occupy a liminal space on a geophysical level, being simultaneously fixed in the ground and open to the fresh air. Caves were to be found both inside and outside the city, inside and outside civilization, inside and outside the wilds, depending on whether they were used to provide temporary shelter or permanent dwelling. They are both open and closed, protective and threatening. Caves oscillate between nature and culture, providing natural shelter that, nevertheless, is the opposite of an *oikos*. Greek grottoes are seen as both passages to the underworld and out of it;[5] as places where things end and where things begin, as meeting points for gods and men.[6] Rivers, riverbanks, seasides, and seashores are perceived as equally marginal and ambiguous. They both divide and unite civic space. They are seen as the meeting point of the known and the unknown, simultaneously frightening and soothing, threatening and promising.[7] The same holds good for the Greek ocean, which in the context of Archaic geophysical speculation is perceived to be a large river of great proportions that embraces the land.[8]

[3] My discussion here owes much to Richard Buxton's eloquent exposition of the topic in his pioneering study entitled *Imaginary Greece* (1994, 80–113). On the same landscapes as *loci* for epiphanies, see more recently Aston (2011, 153–67).

[4] Buxton (1994, 105).

[5] Duerr (1985, 19ff.).

[6] Borgeaud (1988, 49) reminds us of the cave in *Od.* 13.109–12, which had two separate entries, one for the men and one for the gods.

[7] Cf. here how Simonides describes the double-faced and double-minded woman as resembling the unexpected temper of the sea. See Buxton's excellent discussion on the ambiguity of the sea and how this ambiguity is reflected on a mythical level.

[8] *Od.* 6.85.

The same ambiguity and interstitiality applies to the professional activities practised in these topoi. In our narratives, hunting, pasturing, fishing, and wood-cutting are all perceived as being in between: as long as they are linked to human settlements and cultivated land, and as long as they were performed with a centripetal predisposition towards cultural life, they are thought of as part of civilization. When, by contrast, these activities are practised on a nomadic, asocial, unsystematic basis dispersed from the centre of civilized life, then they are conceived as activities appropriate to the *θηριώδης βίος* ('the bestial life' or 'the life that only befits beasts'). The shepherd, for instance, who practises transhumance and uses grottoes for provisional sheltering resembles Odysseus and his companions; he is firmly embedded in the sociopolitical nexus. The shepherd, however, who has no, or dangerously loose, links with the rest of the society, who uses grottoes as his permanent abode and his animals as his only companions, source of sustenance, and possibly even as sexual partners, resembles more Polyphemus and poses a serious threat to civilized life. Needless to say, the same applies to fishermen as well. 'Like the shepherd, the fisherman is little talked of; both prayed to Pan, god of the wild outside.'[9]

From what has been mentioned above, it will have become clear that these topographical features—heavily marked as they are by ambiguity and interstitiality—are perceived as facilitating encounters between mortals and immortals; thus the landscapes that contain them are perceived as exceptionally epiphanic. The common denominator of all three kinds of places (i.e. caves, mountains, and watery places) is their liminal character and their marginal status. The Greeks used the term *ἐσχατίαι* to denote any remote region outside culture, any region that lies beyond human settlements and cultivated land.[10] Mountains, forests, remote and often rocky coastlines, and even the sea are all perceived as being on the borders of human space, as being *loci mirabiles*, i.e. as inviting reversals of roles and provoking unions of mismatching bodies and natures. Because they lie outside the structural world of the polis, they tend to conflate categories that are normally kept separate. Thus, they are perceived as facilitating encounters between gods and humans.

The interaction between mortals and immortals in these spatial contexts is further facilitated by the seclusion and isolation of the perceiver of the divine epiphanies. The ambiguity and liminal character of these epiphanic revelations is intensified by the lack of any further witnesses. It is as if Greek deities have deliberately chosen these man-forsaken places to manifest themselves away from the prying eyes of inquiring crowds, surrounded by the sound of silence in the easily controlled environment of one-to-one interaction. The other way to

[9] Buxton (1994, 97ff.); cf. p.101: 'Sea and mountains are alike in being wild.'

[10] Schol. *ad* Aesch. 1.97 Schultz = 211 a Dilts: *ἐσχατιὰν*] *ἐσχατιαί εἰσι τόποι ἔσχατοι τῆς χώρας περατούμενοι ἢ εἰς ὄρη ἢ εἰς θάλασσαν*. amg VxLf 211b *τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς τέρμασι δὲ τῶν δήμων ἔσχατα κείμενα χωρία ἐσχατιαὶ ἐκαλοῦντο*. amg V x L 211c *Ἄλλως*. *ἐν τοῖς χωρίοις ἐναπολαμβάνονται ὄρη ἢ ἄκρα κατὰ τὴν Ἀττικήν*. *παρ᾽ αὐτὰ δὲ ψιλοὶ τόποι εἰσίν, αἳ ἐσχατιαὶ καλοῦνται*. *τινὲς δὲ ἐργάζονται αὐτούς*. *τινὲς δὲ ἐργάζονται αὐτούς* [*Σφηττοῖ*]. Borgeaud (1988, 60ff.) provides us with a brilliant discussion on the liminality and the ambiguity that haunt these places. The Greek *eschatiai* finds its equivalent in the Latin term *in remotis*, which is the term Horace used to describe the spatial context of his encounter with Bacchus at the beginning of his beautiful nineteenth ode quoted at the head of the chapter.

look at the coupling of remote landscapes and solitude is, of course, to note that for the mortals who made claims of encountering the divine in such a context, having no further witnesses would simply enable them to sustain these claims much easier and for a longer period of time.

What is more, places like the remote landscapes described above, untrodden by human feet and untouched by human civilization—apart from being ambiguous and, in a sense, extremely dangerous—are also astoundingly beautiful. They could be viewed as retaining the ambivalent candour of the Hesiodic golden age, the nostalgic ingenuousness of a Paradise lost. To sum things up, in these *epiphanic landscapes*, as I call them, one would experience an amalgam of loneliness, silence (except perhaps for some pan-piping), and natural beauty. It is no wonder, then, that these same landscapes gave birth to divinely inspired poets and divine poetry. A great number of shepherds, goatherds, hunters, fishermen, and travellers (both of 'myth' and 'history') in surroundings of extreme natural beauty and isolation found themselves confronting a deity or a group of deities that presented them with the gift of either poetry or prophesy.[11] But then again other important questions follow. For example, are epiphanies created by poetry, or do they create poetry themselves? Are these epiphanic narratives poetic creatures or poetry creators? These and other relevant questions will be addressed later on in the third and fourth sections of this chapter, which look at epiphanies that endow their human perceivers with the gift of poetry and epiphanies that somehow have a more interventionist role and appear to shape the perceiver's pre-existing poetic inclinations.

In a sense, these epiphanic landscapes function a bit like the mirror in *Alice through the Looking Glass*; they function as open spaces that allow communication and interaction with the 'other', without endangering the permanent disruption of the world order, as the Greeks knew it. Boundaries may be momentarily crossed, transgressions may occur, as a result corresponding prices may be paid, but the cosmic equilibrium will be retained at all costs. Mortals encounter and interact with the divine in these epiphanic places, but, as will be shown in the next chapter on erotic epiphanies, these meetings do not really last for long; soon gods and men find their own place in the world, each far away from the other.

Divine pluralities *in remotis*

The deities that haunt these remote epiphanic landscapes fall largely into the following categories: a) Panhellenic gods like Dionysus, Apollo Nomios,[12] the Mother of the gods,[13] Pan, his father Hermes, and the mistress of hunting,

[11] No rigid barriers between 'myth' and 'history' can be recognized in a great number of these narratives. This issue is related to the obsession of scholarly debate with the historicity of these narratives, more on which in the Introduction.

[12] Cf. e.g. Call. *Hymn.* 2.47ff. (Apollo Nomios and shepherd Admetos); Olymp. *Vit. Pl.* 1; Ael. *VH* 10.21.

[13] The Great Mother of the gods was also identified with Rhea: Hippol. *Ref.Haer.* 5.9.8. In the Isiac aretalogy delivered by Queen Isis herself (*Met.* 11.5), the goddess reveals that she is also worshipped at Phrygian Pessinus as Cybele. In the same aretalogy Isis is also identified with Demeter of Eleusis. In a fourth-century inscription from Athens Cybele is likened to Demeter of Eleusis (*IG* III, 172); cf. also

Artemis;[14] and b) divine pluralities 'with local attachments', i.e. groups of deities venerated at a specific place such as the Nymphs (Oreads and Naiads), the Charites, the Horai, the Nemeseis, the Mousai, etc.[15] This is a somewhat artificial methodological division since the two categories are by no means mutually exclusive and, at times, they overlap. What I mean is that some of these local deities acquired at some point, and for a variety of reasons, Panhellenic radiance. The reader is reminded here of Pan, whose cult was at first primarily attested in Arcadia, but immediately after the seminal battles of Marathon and Salamis was elevated to Panhellenic stature.[16] A similar development can be noted for some of the divine pluralities, such as the Muses, who populated the slopes of Helikon: they started off by being exclusively venerated by the local communities and were elevated, mainly due to the popularity of Hesiodic poetry, into being the Panhellenic matron goddesses of poetry.

Indeed, the cult of the Muses on Mt Helikon is attested by literary, epigraphic, and archaeological data.[17] Consequently, the idea that the same deities could have been wandering on the slopes of the mountain distributing the gift of poetry to unsuspected shepherds, hunters, or travellers is certainly not Hesiod's own invention. Their mother Mnemosyne was a cultic figure on Kithaeron,[18] Lebadeia,[19] and Thespiae.[20] The cult of the Muses themselves is attested in Chaeronea, on the mountains Helikon (Thespiae) and Lebethreion[21] and in Tanagra. In all

Vermaseren (1966, 26, pl. XV, 1–3). The dedicator of this taurobolium altar is also said to have been a dadouchos in the mysteric rites of Eleusis. The same inscription speaks of the taurobolium as a τελετή. Attis himself was often identified with the Egyptian Osiris, the Phrygian Men, the Greek Pan, or even Bacchus. On Attis' castration, symbolism, and celebration in the mysteries of the Great Mother, see Hippol. *Ref.Her.* 5.7.13–9.11. More on the mystic aspect of the cult of Cybele and Attis below and in Sfameni Gasparro (1985, 111–25) with more bibliography. On the mysteries of Eleusis being the inspiration behind the mysteric rituals held in honour of Isis and the mysteric rites honouring the Mother of the gods see Turcan (1996, 299). On the epiphany of the Mother of the gods in an *in remotis* context, see the section 'Midday: the hour of danger, the hour of epiphany' in this chapter.

[14] Cf. e.g. Call. *Hymn.* 3.19ff.: Artemis delivers her programmatic *rhēsis*: she intends to dwell on the mountains and not visit the human settlements, unless her expertise on the sensitive area of women's labour is needed. Cf. here Achilles Tatius, 7.6: an Ephesian grotto dedicated to Artemis that was to be entered only by virgins. In case any suspicions concerning the chastity of the girl arose, she was shut in the cave. If Pan's flute, that was hang up therein, sounded loudly, the girl was innocent and free to go. Otherwise a long-drawn moan would be heard and the girl would disappear.

[15] This term I have borrowed from Jameson, as noted in chapter 2. Nymphs: Larson (2001) remains the standard work of reference. Horai: Larson (2007, 36 and 163). Charites: Rocchi (1979) and (1980) and Pirenne-Delforge (1996).

[16] See Borgeaud's (1988, 51, esp. chapter 5) splendid discussion on Pan's Arcadian origins and his re-evaluation as a Panhellenic deity after the end of the Persian wars and the introduction of his cult to Athens.

[17] West (1966, 174–5) suggests that there must have been rival cults of the Muses on the mountains Kithaeron and Helikon.

[18] *Schol.* ad *Th.* 54; *Schol.* ad Eur. *Phoen.* 801.

[19] Paus. 9.39.13.

[20] *BCH* 50 (1926); *BCH* 46 (1922), 217–18; *IG* 7.1782; *SEG* 13.347. The site was initially excavated by Stamatakis (*Praktika*, 1882), who uncovered the altar of the Muses and indicated the location of the ancient theatre. It was actually P. Jamot (French School at Athens) who excavated the theatre, uncovered the stoa, and explored further the altar; see his articles in *BCH* 15 (1891) and *BCH* 19 (1895). For a report of these and other excavations on the site see de Ridder in *BCH* 46 (1922) and Roux in *BCH* 78 (1954).

[21] Paus. 9.34.4; Servius *ad* Verg. *Ecl.* 7.21.

probability, the cult of the Muses in Tanagra[22] was strongly associated with the ritual search for Dionysus in the local Agrionia, where the women conducted a ritual search for the god and then quit their quest by saying that the god had left and was hiding away with the Muses.[23] 'The ritual pursuit may have occurred in the hills, as at the Theban Agrionia, for example. If the sanctuary of the Muses was in these hills, it is easy to see how it could have been brought into the rite.'[24] Statues of the Lebethrian Muses were also on Mount Lebethreion.[25] This would have been in accordance with the epidemic/apodemic nature of the Muses as described in Pindar and Diodorus.[26]

According to Pausanias, the Thespians held annual sacrifices on Helikon, athletic contests, and a festival, the Mouseia (*Μουσεῖα*), in honour of the Helikoniades or Helikonides Muses.[27] The *oikistai* of Askra, the giants Otos and Ephialtes, are said to be the first to sacrifice to the Muses and name Helikon a mountain sacred to these deities—a tradition that perhaps attests to the antiquity of the cult. Pausanias again describes the grove (*ἄλσος τῶν Μουσῶν*) of the Muses, where he saw the statues of the Muses created by three famous artists, as well as statues of famous musicians and poets such as Thamyris (portrayed as blind and holding a broken lyre in his hand), Arion, and Orpheus. Among the rest of the ex-voto offerings that Pausanias saw on Helikon, he singles out the tripods, of which the oldest was supposed to be the one Hesiod was awarded for his victory in Chalkis (in the funeral games in honour of Amphidamas). Many victorious contestants in the Mouseia seemed to have followed his example.

In situ excavations revealed a large number of inscriptions related to the official cult of the Muses and its administrative organization.[28] The sanctuary of the Muses (which is variously called *Mouseion*, *alsos*, *temenos*, *hieron* by the ancient authors) is situated in the famous valley of the Muses, about 6 km from Thespiae and about 2 km from the Hesiodic Askra (usually identified with the village Pyrgaki). The surviving architectural remains date from around the third century BC, but cultic activity, as the archaeological data shows, goes back to at least the Archaic era, the late eighth century.

There are a number of geographical, economical, and primarily political reasons that explain why the sanctuary of Thespiae (Mouseion) enjoyed such popularity from the Archaic up to the late Roman and early Byzantine period,[29] and Hesiod's popularity is certainly one of these. The question that naturally follows is whether the cult of the Muses was partly due to the popularity of Hesiodic poetry, or resulted from it. As Schachter rightly remarks, trinities of

[22] *I.Délos* 2552. [23] Plut. *Quest. Conv.* 8 (716f–717a); Plut. *Sulla* 17, 463c.

[24] Schachter (1986, 146).

[25] *Ἐφημερίς Ἀρχαιολογική* (1937) with Schachter (1986, 146).

[26] Epidemic/apodemic qualities: Pindar, *Pyth.* 10.37–8 Maehler: *Μοῖσα δ' οὐκ ἀποδαμεῖ | τρόποις ἐπὶ σφετέροισι*; Diod. 4.4.3: they say that the Muses follow Dionysus in his *apodemia* (*φασὶ δὲ καὶ τὰς Μούσας αὐτῷ συναποδημεῖν*). The lines from Soph. *OT* 1105–9 (*εἴθ' ὁ Βακχεῖος θεὸς ναίων ἐπ' ἄκρων ὀρέων εὖ- | ρημα δέξατ' ἔκ του | Νυμφᾶν Ἑλικωνίδων, αἷς πλεῖστα συμπαίζει*) may allude to the same idea or they may simply be an allusion to the dramatic competitions that were part of the Museia. For the chariot (*ἅρμα, δίφρον*) of the Muses, a par excellence mean of *apodemia*, see *Pyth.* 10.65; 2.3; 7.61–2.

[27] Paus. 9.29–30. [28] Of which see note 3 and Schachter (1986, 148–9).

[29] See Euseb. *Vit. Const.* 3.54 and Zosimos, *Historia nova* 5.24 for the removal of the statues of the Muses in the late fourth century AD and the erection of a statue of Constantine himself.

goddesses associated with fertility and inspiration (both prophetic and artistic) were not unknown in Boeotia before Hesiod.[30] But it was Hesiod's nine Muses—number, names, attributes, and all—that became canonical. Hesiod's achievement of elevating a local cult to a Panhellenic level by connecting the local Helikonian Muses with Panhellenic Olympus was continuously supported by the Thespian magistrates, but it was taken one step further in the Hellenistic period, where as expected the cult of the Helikonides Muses obtained Panhellenic status and the Mouseia were raised to elaborate *penteteric agones*.

Alternatively a shepherd or a hunter may encounter the Nymphs in his dreams.[31] The reader may be reminded of the Nymphs who manifested themselves in Daphnis' dreams, when, utterly exhausted and distraught with grief for the loss of his beloved Chloe, he fell asleep in their sacred cave. [32] Nymphs and Muses aside, the Nemeseis appear also to have manifested themselves to those engaged in activities that took place in these epiphanic landscapes. Out of their epiphanies, the one perceived by Alexander the Great while hunting on Mt Pagus is perhaps the most impressive.[33] The story became the *aition* for the relocation of ancient Smyrna and the foundation of the new city. More importantly the epiphany of the two Nemeseis to Alexander (*αὐτῷ τὰς Νεμέσεις ἐπιφανείσας*) was commemorated on the city's coinage (see Fig. 4.1).[34] As in the case of the epiphany of Parthenos depicted on the coinage of the Crimean Chersonessos, it seems that the epiphanies that were connected to the early foundation of the cities, or those which took place at critical times, were integral to the formation of the cultural and political identity of the cities.

Epiphanic Pan

Pan, with his hybridic, interstitial nature which conflates humanity, divinity, and animality, is a god most prone to divine manifestations in these remote, ambiguous landscapes.[35] Being himself a shepherd and a hunter, as well as an animal, he manifests himself to shepherds and hunters alike.[36] Pan, who when born terrified

[30] Schachter (1986, 156). Ever since Helikon has been a land of artistic and prophetic inspiration. See, for instance, Plut. *Moralia* 398c: *τὴν πρώτην Σίβυλλαν ἐκ τοῦ Ἑλικῶνος παραγενομένην ὑπὸ τῶν Μουσῶν τραφεῖσαν*.

[31] *Od.* 12.131–3: *θεαὶ δ' ἐπιποιμένες εἰσί, | νύμφαι ἐϋπλόκαμοι, Φαέθουσά τε Λαμπετίη τε, | ἃς τέκεν Ἠελίῳ Ὑπερίονι δῖα Νέαιρα*.

[32] Long. 2.22–3.

[33] Paus. 7.5.1–3: *Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ὁ Φιλίππου τῆς ἐφ' ἡμῶν πόλεως ἐγένετο οἰκιστὴς κατ' ὄψιν ὀνείρατος· Ἀλέξανδρον γὰρ θηρεύοντα ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ Πάγῳ, ὡς ἐγένετο ἀπὸ τῆς θήρας, ἀφικέσθαι πρὸς Νεμέσεων λέγουσιν ἱερόν, καὶ πηγῇ τε ἐπιτυχεῖν αὐτὸν καὶ πλατάνῳ πρὸ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, πεφυκυίᾳ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος. καὶ ὑπὸ τῇ πλατάνῳ καθεύδοντι κελεύειν φασὶν αὐτῷ τὰς Νεμέσεις ἐπιφανείσας πόλιν ἐνταῦθα οἰκίζειν καὶ ἄγειν ἐς αὐτὴν Σμυρναίους ἀναστήσαντα ἐκ τῆς προτέρας*. More on this narrative in van Straten (1976) and chapter 8, 'Explanatory function: epiphanies and making sense of the world'.

[34] *BMC Ionia*, no. 452 = van Straten (1976, fig. 5) = Dahmen (2007, pl. 15) = Harris (2009, pl. 6).

[35] Borgeaud (1988, 47–128) and, more recently, Aston (2011, 272–8); on Arcadia being one such place see *eadem* (2011, 235–50).

[36] Hunting and shepherding are two closely linked activities: not only do they share the same landscape and the same gods, they also share vocabulary, as Chantraine (1956, 54–60) has shown. On the special bond between Pan and the shepherds, see Strosweck (2004).

Fig. 4.1. Reverse of a second-century BC bronze coin from Smyrna commemorating the epiphany of the Nemeseis to Alexander (Sammlung von Aulock, Ionia, no. 2231 = BMC Ionia no. 452). The inscription reads *ΣΜΥΡΝΑΙΩΝ · Γ· ΝΕ· Ω· ΕΠ· Σ· ΑΤ*. The obverse (not depicted here) portrays Philip I (244–9 AD) and carries the following inscription: *ΑΥ· Κ· Μ·ΙΟΥ· ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΣ*

humans (his mother Maia) and delighted the gods (Hermes and the Olympians, especially Dionysus), embodies everything that is opposed to the routine of urban life.[37] He is the tutelary god of Arcadia, the Greek pastoral Utopia, the Hellenistic *locus amoenus* par excellence.[38] Pan personifies all that is impossible or forbidden in the monotonous, sterilized environment of human settlements. In fact, Pan abhors civic space;[39] it was out of despair for the death of his beloved Daphnis that he desired the city. Artemidorus, in his *Oneirocritica*, warns his reader that if Pan appears in his dreams dressed as a city resident, then misfortune and turmoil are on their way; if, on the other hand, the dreamer sees Pan in the countryside, then

[37] *Hymn. Hom. Pan* 38ff.

[38] Dion. Hal. 1.32.3: *Ἀρκάσι γὰρ θεῶν ἀρχαιότατός τε καὶ τιμιώτατος ὁ Πάν* Pindar fr. 95 Snell & Maehler: *Ὦ Πάν, Ἀρκαδίας μεδ<έων>ν | καὶ σεμνῶν ἀδύτων φύλαξ* . . . cf. also Hesch. s.v. *Πανία*, Arcadia, the land of Pan, is called Pania.

[39] *Anth. Pal.* 7.535 {*Μελέαγρος*}.

success and joy are to be expected. Pan belongs to these lonely remote landscapes. Whenever he visits human settlements, he brings along noise and disorder.

Young and musically gifted shepherds are also likely to encounter the Nymphs, Pan's loyal companions, *in remotis*: such was the case with the young herdsman Kerambos, who saw the nymphs and became their protégé.[40] Pan, who also took pleasure in the young herdsman's talent, advised him kindly to leave Mt Othrys and to take his flocks back to the fields. Kerambos not only ignored his advice, but, on top of that, insulted the nymphs by questioning their divine parentage. As in a number of other instances where mortals are found guilty of inappropriate conduct with the divine (even if that means simply defying their erotic advances, on which see chapter 5), Kerambos underwent transformation as punishment: he was transformed into a scarab called cerambyx. Young and beautiful goatherds and cowherds were also in constant danger of falling victim to Pan's violent sexual tendencies, as the story of handsome cowherd Daphnis, who slept too heavily to notice ithyphallic Pan and Priapus approaching, reminds us.[41] And so were young hunters, who also found themselves under the influence of Pan and the Nymphs, as Menander's playful narrative from his *Dyskolos* indicates: Pan induced erotic passion in Sostratus for the old man's daughter, while the youth was out hunting with his friends.[42]

Nonetheless, not every encounter with Pan was of an erotic nature. In quite a few of these encounters Pan manifests his predominant phobic nature and spreads terror and destruction to the onlookers of his epiphanies, as the next narrative, an oracle from Miletus, shows. The oracle records Pan's epiphany to nine woodcutters, another group that occupy the same epiphanic landscapes as shepherds, hunters, and travellers.[43] These woodcutters encountered Pan while busying themselves on the mountains and then they were found dead. The question was posed to the oracle by some country dwellers, who made inquiries concerning the cause of this disaster. Apollo's answer read as follows:

> Golden-horned Pan, attendant of grim Dionysus,
> While roaming the wooded mountains (*βαίνων ὑλήεντα κατ' οὔρεα*), in his powerful hand
> held a staff and with the other seized the shrill-voiced hollow syrinx,
> and beguiled the hearts of the Nymphs. Playing on the syrinx his shrill song,
> he brought terror to men (*ἐπτοίησεν*), to all these woodcutters,
> and awe overcame them (*θάμβος δ' ἔχεν εἰσορόωντας*) when they saw the frightful
> body of this supernatural creature springing forward in frenzy.
> And now the finality of chill death would have seized them all

[40] Ant. Lib. *Met*. 22. Cf. Celoria (1992, 79–80 and 164–6).

[41] *Anth. Pal*. 9.338 = Theoc. *Ep*. 3.

[42] Pan is the *θεός προλογίζων* of the play and delivers his speech from the Nymphaeon, the cave sacred to Nymphs in Attic Phyle. Men. *Dysc*. 36, 50–2, and esp. 311–14: *οὗτός μ' ὁ Πάν, μειράκιον, αἱ Νύμφαι θ' ἅμα | ἀπόπληκτον αὐτοῦ πλησίον τῆς οἰκίας | ἤδη ποήσειαν. τετάραγμ', <εὖ> ἴσθ' ὅτι, | οὐδὲ μετρίως, εἴ σοι τοιοῦτος φαίνομαι*. On Pan and his close relationship with the Nymphs, see Larson (2007, 152–5) with further bibliographical suggestions.

[43] Eus. *PE* 5.5–6 Mras. The oracle was among those collected by Porphyry (*c*.260–90 AD) as quoted by Eusebius, who mentions it in a discussion of the punitive attitude of the Greek gods as opposed to the benevolence of the Christian god.

> except that wild Artemis, who kept dread rancour in her heart against him,
> set a limit to his overpowering force.
> She is the one you should pray to, so that she may become your helper.

Apparently the aforementioned woodcutters encountered Pan's scary hybrid figure and were awestruck and terrified (*θάμβος δ' ἔχεν εἰσορόωντας*), thus exhibiting typical reactions of humans perceiving a divine epiphany. The emphasis in the narrative is on Pan's speedy and sudden appearance, which is enhanced by the shrill music of his syrinx. There would have been far more victims than these unfortunate woodcutters—the oracle is very explicit on this—had not Artemis checked the god's wrath. Artemis' personal motive for intervening was some bitter resentment (*κότον αἰνὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἔχουσα*) against the horned half man–half goat god, an undeniably Homeric touch in a narrative that has been as a whole deliberately modelled on Homeric poetry. What exactly happened to the woodcutters cannot rise above the level of speculation, but it is a fair guess to assume that fear, terror, and even repulsion would result from looking at this half-zoomorphic, half-anthropomorphic creature.[44] A similar reaction is exhibited by Pan's mortal nurse in the homonymous Homeric hymn (35–41):

> And in the house she bore Hermes a dear son who from his birth was a wonder to look upon (*τερατωπὸν ἰδέσθαι*), with goat's feet and two horns, a noise-loving, sweet-laughing child (*αἰγιπόδην δικέρωτα πολύκροτον ἡδυγέλωτα*). But his nurse was afraid when she saw (*δείσε γὰρ ὡς ἴδεν*) his implacable face and full beard, and sprung up and fled and left the child. Then luck-bringing Hermes received him and took him in his arms; very glad in his heart (*χαῖρεν δὲ νόῳ*) was the god.

There is a sharp contrast between the reactions that the grotesquely misshapen infant provokes from his mortal wet nurse (fear and repulsion; nurse flees the scene) and his immortal father (proud father Hermes is delighted at the sight of his horned goat-footed son).

A perhaps less well-known professional who also operates under the influence of Pan is the fisherman.[45] Pan Aktios was thought to haunt riverbanks and promontories, where goats come for fresh water, while he was also associated with the remote coastal lines of craggy Greek islands. The reader is reminded of Pan's epiphany in Psyttaleia after the battle of Salamis,[46] and of Pan's terrifying manifestation of power to the Methymnaean pirates,[47] which Longus has closely modelled on Dionysus' epiphany to the pirates in the homonymous Homeric

[44] Borgeaud (1988, 117–18) connects this passage with another from Menander's *Dyskolos*, where Sostratus takes an oath to Pan (309–13): if the young hunter does not keep his word, then Pan's punishment will be to make him *ἀπόπληκτος*, a word that describes an ill state of mind accompanied by aphasia and paralysis.

[45] For Pan as the god of fishermen, see Borgeaud (1988, 65, 214, n. 154); Pi. fr. 98 Snell & Maehler; Eur. *IT* 1125–7 EM 54.27; Theoc. *Id.* 5.14–16 and Schol. ad loc. I find Borgaeud's idea that Pan's involvement with the sea must have something to do with the double meaning of the word *αἴγες* (= 1. 'goats', 2. 'waves') most appealing.

[46] Aesch. *Pers*. 447–9. Cf. also Soph. *Aj*. 697: the chorus asks the 'sea-roaming' god to appear (*φάνηθι*) from Cyllene's snow-beaten rocky ridge. Cf. Phot. s.v. *Πανὸς σκοπός*.

[47] Long. 2.25f.

hymn, as Meillier has convincingly shown.[48] The same scholar cites the text of a fragmentary metrical inscription from the Paneion of El Kanai's in Egypt, where Pan's associations with hunting, shepherding, and sea travelling are all inextricably intertwined.[49] More significantly, a new benevolent aspect of Pan's divine persona appears here: he is said to be ἐπήκοος, namely a god who lends an ear to humans' prayers, manifests himself in moments of extreme danger (such as illness, tempest, or other life-threatening situations), and provides the decisive resolution.[50] It appears that it was Pan who saved the dedicator of the ex-voto from the hands of some terrible troglodytes on land and from the tempest that befell his ship while in the midst of the Erythrean sea, and eventually led the ship safely to the nearest harbour.

Hermes and Dionysus *in remotis*

The *Homeric Hymn to Pan* reminds us that Pan's close relationship with shepherds and mountainous landscape predates his own lifetime and goes back to his father Hermes, who, as we are told, while working as a shepherd in the service of a mortal man called Dryops on Mount Cyllene (Arcadia),[51] lusted after his daughter. Pan was the fruit of that sexual union. However, even as an infant, Hermes seemed to have expressed a keen interest in acquiring some livestock and having a go at leading it to its pasture. Therefore, according to the playful narrative in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, infant Hermes decided to steal the flocks of his brother Apollo. While crossing the mountains of Pieria during sunset, baby Hermes was met with an old vinedresser in the grove of Onchestos (*H.H.Hermes* 87f.) and asked him not to reveal his secret to anyone. The same man, who was grazing his ox this time, was met in early dawn by Apollo and revealed the truth to the god with disastrous consequences (*H.H.Hermes* 184f.).[52]

As a whole, Hermes' associations with herdsmen and shepherds are hardly surprising. After all, Hermes was the god of animal fecundity and was often represented as a shepherd in Greek iconography.[53] Pausanias mentions Kalamis' famous statue, which depicted Hermes carrying a ram on his shoulders.[54]

[48] Meillier (1975).

[49] *Paneion d'el-Kanaïs* 8 = *I.Métr* 164. The inscription dates to around the end of the third century BC.

[50] On *theoi epekooi* see Weinreich (1912). The belief that certain deities were more willing to lend an ear to the prayers of mortals must have been extremely widespread if we are to judge from its ubiquity in both the inscriptional and the literary evidence. The gamut of the deities who are thought of as *theoi epekooi* is also very impressive and includes the god of the Jews and the Christians. See, for instance: Pi. *Ol.* 14.13–15; Pl. *Phileb.* 25b8; Call. *Epigam.* 48.5 Pfeiffer; schol. *Or.* 1637; [Plut] *fluv.* 10.1 and 24.1; Joseph. *AJ* 6.25. Cf. also Joseph. *AJ* 8.115, 8.117, 9.55, 10.18, 14, 22, 20.91, etc.; Phil. Jud. *praem.* 84.4; and Porph. *ad Marc.* 33.2.

[51] *Hymn. Hom. Pan*, 31ff. For Hermes as god of flocks and shepherds see Hes. *Th.* 444ff.; Theoc. *Id.* 1.76ff., etc.

[52] More on this episode in Tzifopoulos (2000) and Fletcher (2008).

[53] Borgeaud (1988, 66); and, more recently, Strosweck, (2004). Cf. *LIMC* vol. V no. 271 a: Boeotian terracotta statuette of Hermes carrying a ram from the Louvre.

[54] Paus. 9.22.1–2 (see chapter 1). Cf. *LIMC* vol. V (1990) 313 s.v. Hermes no. 289: Hermes Kriophoros from the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (inv. no. 54); Stroszeck (2004, 231, fig. 1).

Interestingly enough, the same imagery of Hermes Kriophoros is used in the epiphanic festival of the god in Tanagra. As already mentioned in chapter 3 on healing epiphanies, the festival celebrated Hermes' delivering the city from plague by carrying a ram over his shoulders; to commemorate the god's epiphany and divine intervention, the most beautiful young man was chosen to go round the circuit of the city's wall with a lamb on his shoulders. Hermes Nomios (i.e. 'Hermes of the herdsmen') in the company of Pan and the Nymphs populated the slopes of Mt Kithairon and all of those deities were prone to epiphanic encounters—or at least this is what the chorus in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousai* would have us believe:

> Ἑρμῆν τε νόμιον ἄντομαι {Ant. β'.}
> καὶ Πᾶνα καὶ Νύμφας φίλας
> ἐπιγελάσαι προθύμως
> ταῖς ἡμετέραισι 980
> χαρέντα χορείαις. 980
>
> I entreat Nomios Hermes
> And Pan and the dear Nymphs
> To bestow a benevolent laughter
> To our own graceful choruses.

The chorus in the same play also invoke Dionysus to lead their dances, for Dionysus was also to be met dancing with the Nymphs *in remotis*.[55] The Bacchae, the god's faithful attendants, met up with him on Mount Parnassos and together they organized a particularly vicious hunting game, which resulted in the death of their arch-enemy Pentheus.[56] Dionysus' affinities with Pan and his companions were also noted by the author of the *Homeric Hymn to Pan*, who lays extra emphasis on Dionysus' joyful reactions upon the news of Pan's birth epiphany: of all the gods on Mount Olympus, Dionysus rejoiced most of all at the sight of the noisy, merry, laughing baby with the little horns and the goat's feet.

With Dionysus and Hermes, we are back to fishermen as perceivers of divine manifestations. Fishermen in myth encounter the divine usually in the form of some ancient statue of the god which happens to be miraculously entangled in their nets. That was, for instance, the case with the fishermen from Methymna who netted the strange statue of Dionysus Phallen, a statuary representation of the god comprised out of a phallus and a head;[57] or those other fishermen from Thracian Ainos, who caught the statue of Hermes in their nets.[58] These mythic narratives must have had their counterpart in ritual, if we are to judge from Philochorus' report on the annual fishing of Dionysus the fisherman (Διόνυσος ἁλιεύς) by fishermen, in all probability at Halai Axionides in Attica.[59]

[55] Ar. *Thesm*. 985–1000. [56] Esp. Eur. *Ba*. 1105ff., 1186ff.
[57] Paus. 10.19.3 with Burkert (1983, 202, n. 33).
[58] Call. fr.197 with Burkert (1983, 203, n. 35).
[59] Philochorus *FHG* 3b, 328, F.191 = Schol. T. *Il*. 6.136; Plut. *Aet. Phys*. 914d.4 with Burkert (1983, 208).

EPIPHANIES IN A TRAVELLING CONTEXT

So far I have surveyed divine manifestations that take place in ambiguous, interstitial landscapes, places the Greeks would refer to as *eschatiai* and the Romans as *in remotis*. These epiphanies are perceived by humans involved in activities closely linked with these epiphanic landscapes, such as shepherds, hunters, woodcutters, and fishermen.

Unsurprisingly enough, travellers who inhabit the same dangerous and simultaneously beautiful interstitial landscapes were also thought of as prone to epiphanic manifestations of the same deities. Priam was said to have met Hermes while travelling to the Achaean camp to ransom the body of his dead son;[60] and Thamyris encountered the Muses while on his way home from Oechalia;[61] while Pheidippides (or Philippides in other sources) met Pan while on his way to Sparta on Mount Parthenion;[62] and, finally, Pindar perceived the epiphany of the hero Alcmaeon while on his way to Delphi, to name but a few of the examples that come to mind:[63]

> . . . and I too am glad
> to place garlands of flowers at Alcman, and to shower him with hymns,
> for he is my neighbour and guardian of my possessions,
> and met me (*ὑπάντασεν*) while I was on my way to the renowned naval of the earth,
> and applied his hereditary oracular skills. 60

In two out of these four narratives, the verb (*ὑπ*)*ἀντάω* and (*ὑπ*)*ἀντιάζω* and its cognates are used to describe the face-to-face encounter with the god. *ἀντάω* and *ἄντομαι* (only pres. and impf.) denote 'meeting' but in a hostile way, like meeting the enemy in battle.[64] Alternatively, and when accompanied by the accusative of the person, the same verb can mean 'to greet', 'to entreat', 'to approach following a ritual protocol', as seen in the Aristophanic passage quoted in the previous section (*Thesm.* 977).[65] *Antia(z)ō* and its cognates are also employed by Callimachus in his account of Hesiod's encounter with the Muses and in a number of other cases,[66] where the emphasis is laid on face-to-face encounters with the divine in waking reality, not in a dream. Likewise, in the following epigram (dated to 446 BC), the participle *antiasas* refers expressly to an unfortunate encounter with the divine, which took place in waking reality and had dire consequences for those who defended Koroneia:

> *τλέμονες hοῖον ἀγῶνα μάχες τελέσαντες ἀέλπ[το]* def. 34
> *φσυχὰς δαιμονίος ὀλέσατ' ἐμ πολέμοι·* 35

[60] *Il.* 24.349ff.

[61] *Il.* 2.594–600: *ἔνθά τε Μοῦσαι | ἀντόμεναι Θάμυριν τὸν Θρήϊκα παῦσαν ἀοιδῆς | Οἰχαλίηθεν ἰόντα παρ' Εὐρύτου Οἰχαλιῆος· | στεῦτο γὰρ εὐχόμενος νικησέμεν εἴ περ ἂν αὐταὶ | Μοῦσαι ἀείδοιεν κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο· | αἳ δὲ χολωσάμεναι πηρὸν θέσαν, αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὴν | θεσπεσίην ἀφέλοντο καὶ ἐκλέλαθον κιθαριστύν*. Cf. also *FGrHist* 26 F1, 7 (*Θάμυρις*), where we find a slightly different version of the story: Thamyris is blinded as a result of his defeat in a music contest with the Muses.

[62] Hdt. 6.105–6; Paus. 1.28.4; 8.54.6 (See the Introduction and chapter 1, 'Marathon').

[63] Pi. *P.* 8.56–60. On Pindar and hero cult see Currie (2005, 47–70).

[64] Cf. e.g.: *Il.* 2.595; 15.698; 16.788, etc.; and Call. Epigr. 32;

[65] Cf. also Pi. *P.* 2.71; Eur. *Alc.*1098; *Supp.* 279; Soph. *OC* 250.

[66] Cf. *Il.* 10.551: *ἀλλά τιν' ὔμμ' ὀΐω δόμεναι θεὸν ἀντιάσαντα.*

οὐ κατὰ δ[υσ]μενέ[ο]ν ἀνδρῶν σθένος, ἀλλά τις ἡμᾶς
ἡεμιθέον, θείαν [εἴ]σοδο]ν ἀντιάσας,
ἔβλαφσεν πρόφρον· [– —]δε δύσμαχον ἄγραν
ἐχθροῖς θερεύσας [– h]υμετέροι
σὺν κακοῖι ἐχσετέλεσσε, βροτοῖσι δὲ πᾶσι τὸ λοιπὸν 40
φράζεσθαι λογίον πιστὸν ἔθεκε τέλος.

Unhappy you, who bore to an end unhoped for such a fray and by divine will you lost your lives in war—not by the foeman's might, some hero coming by a path divine met you and in malice balked you. He hunted you down and delivered you to your foes, a prey that they alone had hardly won. Thus, he brought his will to pass and by the warning of your hurt established for all men to take to heart in time to come the law that the fulfilment of prophecy demands their faith.[67]

This is precisely why Fronto questions the exact meaning of Callimachus' ἠντίασεν and he concludes: 'τὸ ὅτ' ἠντίασεν vides quale sit, scilicet ambulanti obviam venisse Musas'.[68] How could the poet have met the Muses while still asleep? The same holds true for Pindar's meeting with the hero Alcmaeon; the phrase ὑπάντασεν ἰόντι ('he met me on my way') precludes the possibility of Pindar's dreaming of this encounter.[69] The adverb ἄντην (which Hermes uses while escorting Priam to the Achaean camp)[70] conveys this same sense of direct and unconcealed meeting with the divine. As for περιπίπτειν ('burst upon him'), which is used to describe the suddenness of Pan's epiphany, it is most suitable to Pan's phobic nature.[71]

Why did the Greeks meet their gods when travelling, especially when travelling alone in remote and usually dangerous landscapes?[72] The previous section suggested that a tentative answer could be found precisely in the interstitial nature of these landscapes, which lie outside the structured world of the polis and thus allow for the conflation of otherwise separate categories, such as those of mortals and immortals. Interstitial landscapes call for epiphanies. However, it also seems that some of the immortals were either themselves prone to travelling, or, otherwise, extremely fond of impromptu meetings with travellers. These deities were imagined as being keen shape-shifters, who would make trial of the passing voyagers and, depending on their reactions, the mortals would either reap rich rewards or suffer cruel penalties.

The story of Battus and Hermes as told in the Hesiodic *Great Eoiae* illustrates beautifully the aforementioned cultural pattern: Hermes, having stolen Apollo's herd of cattle, met up with Battus on a rocky location by the Lycaean mountain.[73]

[67] Trans. Cameron (1940, 97–130) with emendations = *IG* I³ 1163; cf. also *IG* I(2).942 and *SEG* 21.123; *SEG* 10.410. The participle *antiasas* appears with an analogous meaning in two more inscriptions: *Perinthos-Herakleia* 221.13; *MAMA* 4.83.1 (Phrygia).

[68] Fronto, *ad Caes.* 1.4.6. [69] Bowra (1964, 51–2). [70] *Il.* 24.464.

[71] See Borgeaud's (1988) chapter 'Pan in Athens'. Note that the Hippocratic *On the Sacred Disease* has *prospiptei* for the manifestation of the sacred disease (epilepsy), which is strongly associated with Pan, Hekate, the Mother of the gods, and the Korybantes.

[72] Note again the emphasis given to the concept of loneliness as facilitating epiphanic revelations in a travelling context in *Il.* 7.204: εἰ δ' ἄρα τις καὶ μοῦνος ἰὼν ξύμβληται ὁδίτης.

[73] Hes. *Gr. Eoiae* fr. 16 M-W = Ant. Lib. *Met.* 23 with Celoria (1992, 81–2 and 166–8). The episode of Hermes' epiphany to Battus is quite extensive in the *Great Eoiae*. On the contrary, the role of Battus in the *H.H.Hermes* 86ff. is quite restricted. Battus' name could be an allusion to the muteness that he suffered after failing to keep his silence.

Battus realized that Hermes' herd was stolen and asked for such a recompense to keep his silence. Hermes agreed, but later on he changed his form and tested (ἀλλάξας ἑαυτὸν καὶ πειρώμενος) Battus' loyalty and trustworthiness. Hermes lured Battus into his trap by presenting him with a robe in exchange for any information on any stolen cattle. Predictably, Battus fell for the god's trap, told the whole truth about the theft, and was punished for this inappropriate conduct with the divine by being turned into a rock. That the possibility of encountering the divine while travelling to foreign lands was not simply a *locus communis*, but a well-established belief, is indicated by the Hippocratic *De affectionibus interioribus*, where its author speaks of travellers who are prone to divine manifestations in the form of *phasmata*, and how these manifestations are primarily of phobic nature.[74]

Nonetheless, the three deities whose encounters *in remotis* require extra care are Hecate, the Mother of the gods, and Artemis. Out of the three, Hecate (who was extremely fond of either emitting terror-inducing *phasmata* or appearing as a *phasma* herself) was thought of as the most ubiquitous and simultaneously the most hazardous.[75] Artemidorus in his collection of dream interpretations warns the reader that encountering Hecate even in one's dreams can be tricky.[76] As the matron goddess of streets and travellers, she often had her statue by the wayside, and was addressed as ἐνοδία ('of the wayside') or εὐάντητος ('of the auspicious meeting').[77] The latter is a euphemistic cult epithet that was also applied to Artemis and the Mother of the gods, who were also thought of as dangerous to meet while travelling *in remotis*. In the Orphic hymn to the Mother of the gods, the goddess is called Ἀνταία Βασιλεία (41), and at the beginning of the poem she is propitiated as εὐάντητος (9–10). The same cult epithet is also applied to Artemis in lines 13–14 in the homonymous Orphic hymn. The concept of propitiating dangerous epiphanic gods by addressing them with cult epithets meaning 'of the fortunate meeting' is already attested in Aeschylus and Sophocles, where Hecate is called Antaia.[78] Most of Hecate's epiphanies in a *remotis* context appear to have taken place in the midday—an hour of the day that was thought of as particularly

[74] *Int.* 48.7.286 Littré: Αὕτη ἡ νοῦσος προσπίπτει μάλιστα ἐν ἀλλοδημίῃ, καὶ ἢν κου ἐρήμην ὁδὸν βαδίζῃ καὶ ὁ φόβος αὐτὸν λάβῃ ἐκ φάσματος· λαμβάνει δὲ καὶ ἄλλως.

[75] In the *Orphic Hymn to Hecate* 4 the goddess is portrayed as operating in the sky, the earth, and the sea: οὐρανίαν, χθονίαν τε καὶ εἰναλίαν. On Hecate appearing as *phasma* or sending off *phasmata* see the relevant discussion in chapter 1, and the next section on noontime epiphanies in this chapter. Cf. also Fontenrose (1959, 116–19); Burkert (1987, 164, n. 36); Versnel (1987, 51); Zeitlin (1995; 187, n. 35; 307, and 310–11); Johnston (1999, ch. 4); Graf (2003, 253–4); and Versnel (2011, 404) with further bibliography.

[76] *Oneir.* 2.37.

[77] Robert (1965, 285). In a late inscription from Aphrodisias, which accompanied an ex-voto depicting a triple-headed Hecate, we read: Ζωτικός Εὐαντήτῳ εὐχήν.

[78] Hesych. *A* 5307 L. (from Diogenian.): 'ἀνταία'· ἐναντία, ἱκέσιος. <Αἰσχύλος Σεμέλῃ.> σημαίνει δὲ καὶ δαίμονα (Soph. F 311 Pears.). καὶ τὴν Ἑκάτην δὲ 'Ἀνταίαν' λέγουσιν, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπιπέμπειν αὐτά (!). Etym. Magn. p. 111, 49 Gaisf.: . . . 8 'ἀνταία' καὶ ἡ Ἑκάτη ἐπιθετικῶς· . . . ἱκέσιος. Soph. Fr. 400.1 Radt; Aesch. Tetralogy 34, play A, fragment 223.1 Radt. The epithet εὐάντητος is also applied to Zeus Οὔριος. Robert quotes a fragmentary late inscription from an ex-voto dedication to the wind god from his temple in Bosporus: εὐάντητον ἀεὶ θεόν. In an earlier (*c.*3rd cent.) specimen from Ptolemaic Egypt, Pan is addressed as Εὔοδος (i.e. of the good journey, good to meet in a travelling context). More on this in Robert (1981, 42); and Meillier (1975, 125).

ominous and significant. The next section sets out to discuss such noontime epiphanies and the cultural perception of midday as an interstitial period of time.

Midday: the hour of danger, the hour of epiphany

Given the tripartite structure of the day: a) dawn (*ἦμαρ, ἠώς*), b) midday (*μεσημβρία, μεσημερία, μέσον ἦμαρ, μεσούσης τῆς ἡμέρας*), and c) evening (*δείλη*), one can understand why midday was thought of as an interstitial period of time.[79] Midday mediates between the morning and the evening, the first being the time for offering sacrifices to the Olympians, while the latter was the time sacrifices were offered to the chthonic deities.[80] Midday itself was reserved as the time for libations to the dead.[81] Midday is a critical, ambiguous, and somewhat frightening period of the day; it is the time that the sun is at its highest point in the sky and physical objects cast a small shadow or no shadow on the ground, an element that has captured the imagination of the people of different civilizations.[82]

Caillois is right in calling midday the time of the dead: the dead receive libations and communicate with the living in the form of *eidōla* (ghost-like images?).[83] In certain places, a high concentration of these *eidōla* is attested during midday, the vinedresser in Philostratus' *Heroikos* informs us. As expected, shepherds, hunters, and travellers are predominantly in danger of encountering these terrifying figures: 'Not even a shepherd ventures at midday to that place [sc. Pallene] of clattering *eidōla* which rage there.'[84] Heraclides Ponticus reports the story of Empedotimus, a figure parallel to Plato's Er the Pamphylian, who was left behind whilst hunting with his companions. It was there in the heat of noon in a remote and interstitial lanscape that he encountered Pluto and Persephone, who appeared to Empedotimus inbued in light and revealed to him 'all the truth about the souls of the dead, as it were, with his own eyes'.[85]

[79] *Il.* 21.111: *ἔσσεται ἢ ἠὼς ἢ δείλη ἢ μέσον ἦμαρ*; and Schol. *ad Il.* 8.66: *εἰς τρία δὲ διαιρεῖ τὴν ὅλην περίοδον τῆς ἡμέρας*. Compare also the Roman tripartite structure of the day (*ante meridiem*, *meridies*, *post meridiem*). See, for example: Censorinus, *de die natali* 23 and Servius' Schol. in Verg. *Georg.*, 4.401: *Medios cum sol accenderit aestus: fere enim numina tunc videntur*.

[80] See Eustathius *ad Il.* 8.66; *Etym. Magn.* p. 468; Schol. *ad* Apoll. Rh. 1.587.

[81] Note here that it is at midday that Antigone offers libations to her dead brother: Soph. *Ant.* 415–17; Schol. Arist. *Frogs* 293.

[82] Shadow is perceived as a sign of physicality and its absence as a most ominous portent; dead people and ghosts have no shadow and, therefore, lack physicality. Cf. Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 39 on the Pythagorean doctrine that the dead cast no shadow; Paus. 8.38 and Polyb. 16.12.7 on those who enter the precinct of Zeus on Mount Lycaeon casting no shadow. By the same token, those who don't cast a shadow are either dead or about to die: compare here the narratives on the sanctuary of Zeus Lykaios, strongly associated with Pan Lykaios, in Arcadia: those who enter the cave cast no shadow and are soon dead.

[83] Caillois (1937, 142).

[84] Philostr. *Her.* 8.15–17: *θαρσεῖ δὲ οὐδὲ ποιμὴν περὶ μεσημβρίαν ἐκεῖνο τὸ χωρίον ὑποπαταγούντων εἰδώλων, ἃ ἐν αὐτῷ μαίνεται.*

[85] Heraclid. Pont. fr. 93 Wehrli: *οὔτε τὸ θείας ἀλ<ηθείας> τυχεῖν ἀδύνατον ψυχὴν ἀνθρωπίνην τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου πραγμάτων καὶ ἀγγεῖλαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ ὁ κατὰ τὸν Ἐμπεδότιμον λόγος, ὃν Ἡρακλείδης ἱστόρησεν ὁ Ποντικός, θηρῶντα μετ' ἄλλων ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ σταθερᾷ κατά τινα χῶρον αὐτὸν ἔρημον ἀπολειφθέντα λέγων τῆς τε τοῦ Πλούτωνος ἐπιφανείας τυχόντα καὶ τῆς Περσεφόνης*

Midday was the period of time that deities closely linked with the underworld (Pluto, Persephone, Hecate, Empousa) manifest themselves to those most prone to divine manifestations (shepherds, goatherds, hunters, travellers, etc.) *in remotis*. It is of significance that the divine encounter takes place only when Empedotimus is away from his fellow hunters in an isolated location. Epiphanies *in remotis* need privacy, which is usually provided either by solitude or by means of a dream vision. The famous scene in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, where Empousa—often identified, or associated with Hecate—appears to Xanthias but not to Dionysus, comes to mind.[86] Of the two travellers to the underworld, only one of them sees this monstrous creature that was imagined as having one foot of bronze and a donkey's foot for the other, and as having an appetite for metamorphoses: she changes herself into an ox, then a mountain, a beautiful woman, and finally into a bitch.[87] According to Suda, Empousa is either a *phasma* sent by the goddess Hecate or the goddess herself;[88] she mostly manifests herself at midday, when libations are offered to the deceased. It is at midday again that Empousa appears to Eucrates alone: when he leaves the cultivated land, he enters the forest, another topographical feature that, in our sources, is characterized as *eschatiai* or *in remotis*.[89] Hecate's chthonic associations need not be discussed here; the Orphic hymn to Hecate, nevertheless, offers a good link between Hecate the goddess of the dead and Hecate the Nymph, who haunts the mountains and often manifests herself to shepherds.[90]

There is something mesmerizing, dangerous, erotic, and even magical about midday.[91] It is the time that the sun sits still in the midst of the sky and the heat is at its peak. The Greeks would refer to this heat by using the formulaic structure *μεσημβρινοῖσι θάλπεσιν* ('in the heat of the noon').[92] It is the time of silence and the time of stillness, but above all, midday is the time of Pan and his companions, the Nymphs. Midday is a most dangerous time of the day to hang around in the landscapes that are sacred to Pan and the Nymphs (i.e. meadows, rivers, forests, mountains, etc.). One may be caught up by Pan and become a *Πανόληπτος*, or by the Nymphs and become a *νυμφόληπτος*, or at least this is what is implied in

καταλαμφθῆναι μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ φωτὸς τοῦ περιθέοντος κύκλῳ τοὺς θεούς, ἰδεῖν δὲ δι' αὐτοῦ πᾶσαν τὴν περὶ ψυχῶν ἀλήθειαν ἐν αὐτόπτοις θεάμασιν.

[86] Ar. *Ran*. 276ff. In a number of sources Empousa's epiphany is linked to terrifying manifestations in the course of the mysteries of Sabazios: Dem. 18.130; *Vitae Aesch*. 2.2; *Schol. ad Hermogenis status seu artem rhetoricam*, 5.130.22; Harp., s.v. *Ἔμπουσα*. Cf. also Ar. Frr. 500, 501 A: *χθονία θ' Ἑκάτη | σπείρας ὄφεων ἐλελιζομένη*. *B*: *τί καλεῖς τὴν Ἔμπουσαν;*

[87] Ar. *Ran*. 290–2; cf. *Eccles*. 1056ff.; Luc. *Salt*. 19.16

[88] Suda s.v. *Ἔμπουσα*: *φάντασμα δαιμονιῶδες ὑπὸ τῆς Ἑκάτης ἐπιπεμπόμενον καὶ φαινόμενον τοῖς δυστυχοῦσιν. ὃ δοκεῖ πολλὰς μορφὰς ἀλλάσσειν . . . ἔνιοι δὲ τὴν αὐτὴν τῇ Ἑκάτῃ, κτλ.* Cf. also Harpocr. s.v. *Ἔμπουσα*: *Ἔμπουσα: Δημοσθένης ὑπὲρ Κτησιφῶντος. φάσμα τί φασιν εἶναι τῆς Ἑκάτης, ὅπερ στοιχοῦσιν ἐφαίνετο. πλήρης δὲ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἡ κωμῳδία.*

[89] Luc. *Philops*. 22.

[90] On Hecate and her epiphany in a theurgic context, see the expert discussion of Johnston (1990).

[91] At least in Mediterranean countries: cf. Long. 1.24.1, where midday brings along sexual experimentation and eventually sexual awareness for the two young people. We can also compare here Plut. *Paroimiai* 2.3: *<Λυδὸς ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ:> οἱ Λυδοὶ κωμῳδοῦνται ταῖς χερσὶν ἑαυτῶν πληροῦντες τὰ ἀφροδίσια.*

[92] Aesch. *Th*. 431, 446 and Scholia ad loc.; Arist. *Av*. 1096.

passage 238c from Plato's *Phaedrus*.[93] Socrates, of course, dismisses all this as popular religious belief, but his playful remark proves that at his time there must have been many Athenians who took these caveats seriously.

Midday is the time of stillness and silence; it is the time that any of those activities closely associated with the landscapes of Pan and the nymphs need to cease, for Pan takes his rest in midday and it is unlawful to disturb him. If Pan is awoken and disturbed, as Theocritus says in his *Idylls*, he could wreak terror on the shepherds and the flocks.[94] Borgeaud explains why noon and Pan both contradict and complement one another: noon is the typical silent and motionless period of the day; it is the still part of the day.[95] Pan, on the contrary, is the god of noise, of music, of movement. If the god is awoken, there is always the danger of Pan filling this silence with noise and movement; there is always the danger of being possessed by the god, or simply experiencing the terrible wrath of the god. The nine woodcutters felt the wrath of the god in the forest when accidentally encountering the god and died;[96] the pirates who abducted Chloe also felt it and subsequently almost went mad after having seen most unusual spectacles and having heard the strange sound of the god's pipe that put them into a state of warlike panic and terror.[97] Invisible enemies were sought that night, but no enemy was seen. The riddle was solved the next day, when Pan appeared in the dreams of the chief pirate, who was having his noon slumber, and explained the cause of his anger (*ἔστε ἀμφὶ μέσην ἡμέραν ἐς ὕπνον οὐκ ἀθεεὶ τοῦ στρατηγοῦ καταπεσόντος αὐτὸς ὁ Πὰν ὤφθη τοιάδε λέγων·*).[98]

Surprisingly enough, Pan assumes the philanthropic role of healer to those who respect his afternoon siesta: it was at midday when Pan himself was asleep on the hills and he was seen by Hyginus, who was cured by the help of the god.[99] The dedicator is very careful to emphasize that he and his sons (?) saw Pan not in a dream, but in waking reality: *πᾶσι γὰρ [ἐν τεκέ]εσσιν ἐμοῖς ἀνα[φ]ανδὸν ἐπέστης/ οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλὰ μέσου ἤματος ἀμφὶ δρόμους*.

[93] On *nympholyptoi* and *nympholepsia*, see the seminal article by Connor (1988) and the recent study of Pache (2011, esp. 13–70).

[94] Theoc. *Id.* I.15–18: {*ΑΙΠΟΛΟΣ*}: *οὐ θέμις, ὦ ποιμήν, τὸ μεσαμβρινὸν οὐ θέμις ἄμμιν | συρίσδεν. τὸν Πᾶνα δεδοίκαμες· ἢ γὰρ ἀπ' ἄγρας | τανίκα κεκμακὼς ἀμπαύεται· ἔστι δὲ πικρός, | καί οἱ ἀεὶ δριμεῖα χολὰ ποτὶ ῥινὶ κάθηται.*

[95] Borgeaud (1988, 111). Cf. also Pl. *Phdr.* 242a: {*ΦΑΙ.*} *Μήπω γε, ὦ Σώκρατες, πρὶν ἂν τὸ καῦμα παρέλθῃ. ἢ οὐχ ὁρᾷς ὡς σχεδὸν ἤδη μεσημβρία ἵσταται ἡ δὴ καλουμένη σταθερά;*

[96] Eus. *PE* 5.5–6 (on which see above).

[97] Long. 2.24–7 Dalmeyda.

[98] In the rural parts of modern Greece that the Blums investigated during the late 1960s, Pan was no longer known by his original name; he was nevertheless seen in his original form. In some of the narratives they recorded, the informant describes a hybrid creature (half man–half goat), which was no longer called Pan, but Stringlos (*Στρίγγλος*). Both the ancient Pan and the modern *Στρίγγλος* were notoriously known for their noontime assaults, causing panic to both shepherds and their flocks. Empousa, often identified with Lamia in the Blums' narratives—the monstrous figure that, as it has been noted above, was already known from Aristophanes' times and closely linked with midday catastrophes and livestock—appears in some of these modern Greek narratives too: she is the personification of an affliction that falls on the flocks and kills them during noontime. See Blum and Blum (1970, see esp. ch. 7, story 13).

[99] Kaibel, *Epigr. Gr.* 802 with Bousquet in *Klio* (1970, 37–9) and Lane-Fox (1986, 131; 703, n. 25).

The Mother of the gods, another deity who is closely linked with the same epiphanic landscapes (especially the mountainous landscapes) appeared to Themistocles during his midday snooze and warned him against taking the main road: *τῷ δὲ λέγεται καθεύδοντι μεσημβρίας τὴν Μητέρα τῶν θεῶν ὄναρ φανεῖσαν εἰπεῖν*.[100] She thus saved his life. The Mother of the gods was said to have been closely associated not only with mountains, but also with divine/poetic inspiration and possession. We have already met the terms *Πανόληπτος* and *Νυμφόληπτος*; Hermias the Neoplatonist draws a parallel between these terms and the term *Ματρόληπτος*, namely the one possessed by the Mother of the gods. In this context we may better understand Pindar's encounter with the very body-conscious statue of the Mother of the gods (*τὸν δὲ Πίνδαρον ἐπαισθόμενον συνιδεῖν Μητρὸς θεῶν ἄγαλμα λίθινον τοῖς ποσὶν ἐπερχόμενον*) while he was tutoring Aristodemos, the aulos player, on Mt Helikon.[101] To reciprocate this honour, Pindar established the statues of both Pan and the Mother of the gods near his house. Further consultation of the Delphi oracle resulted in the establishment of the temple of the Mother of the gods and her mystic rites. Pindar himself was ordered to preside over her *teletai*.

To sum up, sleep and dreams are a popular medium for divine manifestations in these lonely and remote epiphanic landscapes primarily because most of these epiphanies happen at midday, a period of the day which is, at least in the Mediterranean countries, closely associated with sleep. Furthermore, caves, one of the typical epiphanic topographical features, are also closely linked with ritualized sleep (i.e. incubation practised in grottoes sacred to Pan and the Nymphs) in particular and sleeping in a sheltered place in general. Compare here the numerous ex-votos that depict the patient practising incubation accompanied by three Nymphs, Charites, Horai or similar divine pluralities, such as the Nemeseis.[102]

Midday has captured the imagination of modern and ancient poets and philosophers: from Schelling to Goethe and from Socrates (see the passage from *Phaedrus* discussed above) to Nietzsche, they all described their supernatural experiences at midday, which unsurprisingly enough took place in epiphanic landscapes like those discussed in our first section. Noontime and poetic or philosophical inspiration derived from an epiphanic manifestation became so closely linked that—despite no indication being given of the temporal context of the Muses' epiphany in the original Hesiodic account—some late sources (like *Anthologia Palatina* 9.64) place Hesiod's encounter with the Muses at midday.[103] In this way the Hesiodic narrative falls into the formulaic narrative pattern: a shepherd/hunter/traveller/woodcutter/goatherd (etc.) meets a deity and becomes a poet or a prophet.

[100] Plut. *Them*. 30.2. In the same chapter we are told the foundation legend of Themistocles' temple of Cybele Dindymene at Magnesia, only one out of the many cases where an epiphany of a deity results in the establishment of a new temple and cult. More on this in chapter 8.

[101] Schol. *ad* Pind. *Pyth*. 3. 137b, p. 80.16 Drachmann.

[102] See more on that in van Straten (1976, 1–38). For sleeping in the midday in general and the afternoon siesta in Mediterranean countries, see: Plut. *Luc*. 16.4f.; *Brut*. 4.8f.; *Mulier. Virt*. 252e.

[103] *Anth. Pal.* IX 64.1–2: *Αὗταὶ ποιμαίνοντα μεσαμβρινὰ μῆλά σε Μοῦσαι/ἔδρακον ἐν κραναοῖς οὔρεσιν, Ἡσίοδε*.

Pausanias in a colourful narrative tells us of a shepherd who in the ominous hour of midday fell asleep leaning against the grave of Orpheus;[104] while still asleep the shepherd began to sing Orphic poetry in a loud and sweet voice. Those who were pasturing nearby left their tasks and gathered around to listen to the shepherd, who became a poet in his sleep and even started reciting poetry while still asleep (*οἱ οὖν ἐγγύτατα νέμοντες ἢ καὶ ἀροῦντες ἕκαστοι τὰ ἔργα ἀπολείποντες ἠθροίζοντο ἐπὶ τοῦ ποιμένος τὴν ἐν τῶι ὕπνωι ὠιδήν*). Once again we can note the close correlation between a) midday, b) sleeping at midday, and c) divine inspiration. All three of these elements are to be found in another narrative, again by Pausanias: Pindar, still a young man, on his way to Thespiae (<*theios* + *epos* = Pindar becoming a poet on his way to the city of the divine voice?) felt tired and fell asleep at midday.[105] He then experienced what we have called a 'metonymy' epiphany: namely bees visited the young man and made their beehive on his lips. That was also the day that Pindar became a poet, according to the charming local biographical tradition. Unfortunately, both prophetic and poetic abilities were thought of as divine gifts that, more often than not, came at a rather high price.[106] The next two sections look further into this kind of divine epiphany.

EPIPHANIES INITIATING POETRY

In the Greek mindset there is a strong correlation between poetry, blindness, and divination.[107] Poets and seers alike are presented, almost invariably, as blind and yet endowed with a profound insight that gives them partial access to the deeds and the views of the gods.[108] Poets and seers, whom the Muses especially loved, have lost their eyesight, as Homer tells us about Demodocus, the blind bard in the Odyssey.[109] The mythical poet Thamyris was made blind by the Muses, when he dared to challenge their musical talent and abilities.[110] The historical Stesichoros,

[104] Paus. 9.30.10. The ERC-funded research programme Living Poets at the University of Durham (UK) currently investigates the cultural parameters that nuance this and other narratives of analogous content.

[105] Paus. 9.23.2; cf. also Dio Chrys. *Or.* 64.22 and Philostr. *Imag.* 12 for a pictorial representation of the scene.

[106] The most-quoted example of Teiresias who lost his eyesight, but in exchange gained the gift of prophecy, as accounted for in Call. *Hymn.* 5.51–84, is discussed in the following chapter on erotic epiphanies.

[107] Buxton (1980).

[108] Cf. Dodds (1951, 81): 'Just as the truth about the future would be attained only if man were in touch with a knowledge wider than his own, so the truth about the past could be preserved only on a like condition. Its human repositories, the poets, had (like the seers) their technical resources, their professional training; but vision of the past, like insight into the future, remained a mysterious faculty, only partially under its owner's control, and dependent in the last resort on divine grace. By that grace poet and seer alike enjoyed a knowledge denied to other men.'

[109] *Od.* 8.63–4: *τὸν περὶ Μοῦσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδου δ' ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε· | ὀφθαλμῶν μὲν ἄμερσε, δίδου δ' ἡδεῖαν ἀοιδήν.*

[110] Hes. fr. 65 M-W; *Il.* 2.594. Note here that Thamyris in *Iliad* 2 experiences an epiphany of the Muses in a travelling context. The Muses made an end of his singing, while on his way back from Oechalia, and punished him for his shameful boasting by maiming him and depriving him of his

on the other hand, lost his sight as a punishment for his insulting 'point of view' on the role of Helen in the Trojan war.[111] Demodocus himself, according to a late source, was blinded having been defeated in a contest with the Muses.[112] Others, like the tragic poet Achaios, became blind when stung by bees, the metonymic substitute for the Muses.[113] The association between poetry and loss of vision had become a topos. Blindness became the culturally specific prerequisite for success in the sphere of poetic production. 'Moreover, all these poets are blind,' as Dio Chrysostom ironically remarked, 'and they do not believe it possible for anyone to become a poet otherwise.'[114]

Some other poets, like Xenocritos from Locris, were simply born blind,[115] as were some seers, like Ophioneus from Messenia.[116] There are, nevertheless, a good number of blind seers, who like poets are blinded because of inappropriate visual encounters with the divine: they somehow saw spectacles that were not meant to be seen.[117] The first example that comes to mind is the Callimachean account of how the seer Teiresias was blinded for accidentally watching Athena bathing at midday, in a spring on Mount Helikon.[118] The blind youth received the gift of prophecy as a recompense for the loss of his sight. All the elements that we have underscored as predominant in epiphanies *in remotis* are present in this narrative: loneliness, remote landscapes, and midday.[119]

Euenios was yet another seer who acquired the gift of divination as compensation for his blindness.[120] Ironically enough, Euenios became blind not because he saw something he should not have seen, but because he did not see what he should have seen. While he was shepherding the sacred herd of Helios on the slopes of Mount Lacmon in Apollonia, or so the Herodotean narrative goes, Euenios fell asleep and wolves fell upon the flock and killed a large number of the sheep.[121] Euenios was brought to justice for his crimes and his punishment was blindness. Later on, however, the oracle declared that the man should be fully compensated by acquiring the gift of divination, for it was the gods themselves who sent the wolves to his herd. The blind fisherman Phormion from Erythrae came to divination from an utterly different path: he was born blind, but having seen a prophetic vision concerning the statue of Athena and having consulted the people of the city in accordance with his vision, he not only became a seer but regained his sight.[122]

wondrous singing and making him forget his artful playing. The word *pēros* does not have a clear meaning in Greek; it can mean disabled in general.

[111] *PMG* frr. 192–3. [112] *Schol.* in Ov. *Ibis* 272. [113] *TrGrF* i 20 Achaius I, T 3a+b.

[114] Dio Chrys. *Or.* 36, 10–11: *εἰσὶ δὲ πάντες οὗτοι τυφλοὶ καὶ οὐχ ἡγοῦνται δυνατὸν εἶναι ἄλλως τινὰ ποιητὴν γενέσθαι*. Dio traces this tradition back to Homer, who was also thought to be blind, probably because of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 172.

[115] Müller, *FHG* ii21. [116] Paus. 4.12.10.

[117] See Hopfner's article in *RE*, s.v. *mantike*. [118] Call. *Hymn*. 5.70ff.

[119] Call. *Hymn*. 5.51–84. For other versions of the myth see Buxton (1980, 28).

[120] Hdt. 9.93–4.

[121] The herding of this flock was reserved not for ordinary shepherds, but for the offspring of the wealthiest and the most distinguished families in the area. For more information on Euenios see Burkert (1997b) and Griffiths (1999).

[122] Paus. 7.5.7.

Poetry and prophecy are viewed as inextricably intertwined already in Hesiod's account of his epiphanic encounter with the Muses, who breathed into him a divine voice so he could celebrate in his song not only past, but also future events.[123] More importantly, poets and prophets—and to an extent philosophers—were thought of as being closer to the gods than the rest of the mortals. It was precisely this extreme degree of proximity that, according to Buxton, caused their physical defects in an attempt to retain some sense of cosmic equilibrium.[124] You gain something precious and you lose something precious in return. Furthermore, it only makes sense for certain sensory faculties (such as sight and hearing) to become redundant when their use is no longer required. Poets and seers drew their knowledge directly from the gods; hence, they no longer have to rely on their sensory perception to collect the kind of information ordinary humans need to acquire so as to survive.

The archetypical account of a shepherd who encountered the divine on the mountains and received the gift of poetry comes from Hesiod's *Theogony* (ll. 22–34). Hesiod encountered the Muses while pasturing his lambs below Helikon. The patron goddesses of poetry first addressed him in strongly pejorative terms, calling shepherds like him 'wretched things of shame' and 'mere bellies'; then they declared their programmatic ῥήσις (ll. 26–8); and, finally, prompted him to pluck (ἔδον . . . δρέψασθαι), or the Muses plucked themselves (ἔδον . . . δρέψασαι), a branch of laurel and gave it to Hesiod to have as a staff. The staff itself was said to be a wondrous thing (θηητόν).[125] The narrative of the poet's personal encounter with the nine Muses concludes with the goddesses breathing into him a divine voice (ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μοι αὐδὴν θέσπιν), so that he would be able to celebrate with his songs themes of the past and of the future, and thus honour the goddesses of knowledge and poetic inspiration themselves at the beginning and at the end of his performance.[126]

Dodds seems convinced that the poet had an auditory epiphany, not a visual encounter with the Muses.[127] This view can be supported by Dio's testimony, which refers to Hesiod's and Homer's (!) visitation by the Muses as an auditory epiphany rather than a visual one: the two poets were said to have heard 'the brief voice of the Muses, a breath of divine nature and truth, which resembled the

[123] Hes. *Th.* 31–2.

[124] Buxton (1980, 29): 'But, precisely for that reason, they blur the distinction between god and man. In order to preserve the distinction intact, special powers possessed by mortals are, in the logic of myth, balanced by special defects.'

[125] See West (1966) *ad* 31. Both variants are ancient: the participle renders the poet a more passive recipient and implies that the Muses assumed human form and gave Hesiod a token of their visitation; the infinitive presupposes Hesiod's participation in the whole scene and for some represents a symbolic acceptance of the Muses' poetic call.

[126] On the similarities of Hesiod's and the Muses' song, see Clay (1988). She argues convincingly enough that the song of the Muses as described in *Th.* 1–115 is of 'theogonic' nature.

[127] Dodds (1951, 117, n. 86): 'Hesiod does not claim to have seen the Muses, but only to have heard their voices; they were presumably κεκαλυμμέναι ἠέρι πολλῷ (*Th.* 9). Some MSS and citations' reading δρέψασαι in l. 31 make the Muses pluck a branch of bay and give it to him, which would put the *vision* [italics mine] into the class of "rapport" stories . . . But we should probably prefer the less obvious reading δρέψασθαι "they granted me to pluck for myself" a branch of the holy tree—the symbolic act expresses his acceptance of his "call".'

bright light of a fire, which flashed out of some invisible source'.[128] As for the description of the Muses as *κεκαλυμμέναι ἠέρι πολλῷ* and *ἐννύχιαι* in lines 9 and 10 respectively, on which Dodds bases his view, neither of these is relevant to the vision of the poet, since they are both part of the general description of the activities of the Muses on Mt Helikon that ends in line 21. Even if they were veiled in thick mist or even if they were invisible when on their own, in the presence of human beings they had to materialize somehow and shape themselves in a way that would facilitate their interaction with humans. As seen in chapter 1, this is precisely the kind of mediating role functional metamorphosis plays in mortal–immortal interactions: it enables the meeting of their contradictory natures and eradicates the difficulties involved in both the sensory and the intellectual perception of the gods by the humans. Moreover, presenting the poet as simply listening to the Muses and not responding to their corporeal manifestation would weaken significantly the effect of the *Musenweihe* scene and would not be in accordance with the majority of poetic epiphanies, where the deity/ies manifest themselves corporeally.

Hesiod's personal encounter with the Muses became the archetype for narrating a poet's initiation into the world of poetic creativity; and Helikon was eventually identified with this miraculous place, where the Muses transform ordinary shepherds into prolific poets and writers.[129] It was the Nymphs that initiated Theocritus into the magic world of poetry, as the poet himself tells us, while he was pasturing his cattle on Mount Ida;[130] while Quintus of Smyrna presents himself as having been initiated by the Muses when he was pasturing his cattle in the fields of Smyrna.[131] Thus, the poetic enlightenment of Theocritus and Quintus of Smyrna are recast into the all-too-familiar cultural mould of divine epiphanies perceived by shepherds, hunters, and the rest of the professional individuals who were thought of as operating in those remote epiphanic landscapes, only this time the emphasis is on the transformation of the conceptual universe of the simple and naive shepherd which, via the power of divine interaction, opens up to intellectual vistas unthinkable for the common folk and the common mind.

In the case of the poetic epiphany experienced by Quintus of Smyrna, the narrator is eager to stress the youthfulness of the perceiver of the epiphany: Quintus' encounter with the Muses took place before the dew of youth appeared

[128] Dio Chrys. *Or.* 36.34 (*φωνή τις ἐκ Μουσῶν ἀφίκετο βραχεῖα καί πού τις ἐπίπνοια θείας φύσεώς τε καὶ ἀληθείας, καθάπερ αὐγὴ πυρὸς ἐξ ἀφανοῦς λάμψαντος· ἃ ἔπασχον ἐκ Μουσῶν καὶ κατείχοντο Ὁμηρός τε καὶ Ἡσίοδος*). On the other hand, one may argue that this is a late source that gives us a rationalized version of the epiphanic revelation and does not tell us much about Hesiod's visionary experience per se. This passage is not quoted by Dodds.

[129] Himer. *Or.* 47.76: *ἔνθα δὴ καὶ τοὺς ποιμένας αἱ Μοῦσαι ποιητὰς ἐργάζονται*. Cf. also Luc. *Rhet. Praecept.* 4, who comments on the same cultural topos not without some ironic overtones. More on this literary topos in Zamarou (2006).

[130] Theoc. *Id.* 7.91–5: *Ἄυκίδα φίλε, πολλὰ μὲν ἄλλα | Νύμφαι κὴμὲ δίδαξαν ἀν' ὤρεα βουκολέοντα | ἐσθλά, τά που καὶ Ζηνὸς ἐπὶ θρόνον ἄγαγε φάμα· | ἀλλὰ τόγ' ἐκ πάντων μέγ' ὑπείροχον, ᾧ τυ γεραίρειν | ἀρξεῦμ'· ἀλλ' ὑπάκουσον, ἐπεὶ φίλος ἔπλεο Μοίσαις*. The Nymphs were closely associated with the Muses and the Charites to the extent that they are often to be found as variants in slightly different versions of the same story as given by different authors.

[131] Quint. Smyrn. 12.308–10: *ὑμεῖς γὰρ πᾶσάν μοι ἐνὶ φρεσὶ θήκατ' ἀοιδήν, | πρίν μοι <ἔτ'> ἀμφὶ παρειὰ κατασκίδνασθαι ἴουλον, | Σμύρνης ἐν δαπέδοισι περικλυτὰ μῆλα νέμοντι.*

on his cheeks. In fact, the youthfulness of the perceivers of these epiphanic revelations is underscored in the majority of the narratives, providing thus extra pathos and possibly emphasizing the element of liminality in these meetings. A more rationalistic explanation would be, of course, to claim that this was only another way to describe the early manifestation of their poetic talent. Two historians, Istros and Chamaileon, report that young (*παῖς*) Pindar fell asleep while hunting on Helikon and experienced a bees epiphany that initiated his professional career: he fell asleep and dreamt that his mouth was full of honey; then he woke up and started writing poetry.[132]

In Pausanias' account, Pindar's metonymy epiphany, as we called it in chapter 1, took place while the poet was travelling to Thespiae, a renowned centre of the cult of the Muses:

> *ὑπερβάντι δὲ τοῦ σταδίου τὰ ἐν δεξιᾷ δρόμος ἵππων καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ Πινδάρου μνῆμά ἐστι. Πίνδαρον δὲ ἡλικίαν ὄντα νεανίσκον καὶ ἰόντα ἐς Θεσπιὰς [θέρους] ὥρᾳ καύματος περὶ μεσοῦσαν ἅλιστα ἡμέραν κόπος καὶ ὕπνος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ κατελάμβανεν· ὁ μὲν δὴ ὡς εἶχε κατακλίνεται βραχὺ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὁδοῦ, μέλισσαι δὲ αὐτῷ καθεύδοντι προσεπέτοντό τε καὶ ἔπλασσον πρὸς τὰ χείλη τοῦ κηροῦ. ἀρχὴ μὲν Πινδάρῳ ποιεῖν ᾄσματα ἐγένετο τοιαύτη·*
>
> When the traveller passes the stadium on his right side he will see the racecourse, where also Pindar's memorial is situated. When Pindar was a very young man on his way to Thespiae in the hot season just at midday, he was overcome by weariness and sleep. He lay down where he was, just above the road, and as he slept bees flew up and made their wax on his lips. This was when Pindar began to compose songs.[133]

One cannot fail to notice here that the 'hunting while experiencing an epiphany' formula in *Vita Ambrosiana* has been substituted by the 'travelling while experiencing an epiphany' one. Moreover the visitation takes place at midday, on a hot summer day, another formulaic element of epiphanic narratives. Now in Aelian's account, an additional formulaic element of epiphanies that take place on mountains is added; Pindar is neither a *pais* nor a *neaniskos*; he is an exposed infant: *Πλάτωνος δὲ μελίττας ἐς τὸ στόμα κηρίον ἐργάζεσθαι. καὶ Πινδάρῳ τῆς πατρῴας οἰκίας ἐκτεθέντι μέλιτται τροφοὶ ἐγένοντο, ὑπὲρ τοῦ γάλακτος παρατιθεῖσαι μέλι.*[134] The formula of youthful recipients of epiphanic revelation on mountains has been taken to an extreme here. Pindar, having been exposed by his parents, was nurtured by bees and fed with the honey of sweet poetic speech.[135] Aelian's

[132] *Vita Pindari Ambrosiana*, Scholia *ad Ol.* ed. Drachmann = Chamaeleon fr. 32 Wehrli: *παῖς δὲ ὢν ὁ Πίνδαρος, ὡς Χαμαιλέων καὶ Ἴστρος φασί, περὶ τὸν Ἑλικῶνα θηρῶντα αὐτὸν ὑπὸ πολλοῦ καμάτου εἰς ὕπνον κατενεχθῆναι, κοιμωμένου δὲ αὐτοῦ μέλισσαν τῷ στόματι προσκαθίσασαν κηρία ποιῆσαι.* Cf. Also Eustathius *Vita Pindari* 27, *Biographi Graeci* ed. Westermann p. 92: *Χαμαιλέων δέ* [*φασι*] *καὶ Ἴστρος ἱστοροῦσιν, ὡς περὶ Ἑλικῶνα θηρῶντος αὐτοῦ* (sc. *Πινδάρου*) *καὶ καμάτῳ κατενεχθέντος εἰς ὕπνον μέλισσα τῷ στόματι προσκαθίσασα κηρία ἐνέθετο.*

[133] Paus. 9.23.2.

[134] Ael. *VH* 12.45. In chapter 5, on erotic epiphanies, we will see how mountains and caves were thought of traditionally as places where mothers exposed their children. Compare also Longus 1.4 where Dryas finds the exposed infant Chloe in the cave of the Nymphs. Other exposed offspring on mountains include Oedipus on Kithaeron, Paris on Ida, Telephos on Parthenion, etc. See more on the topic in Buxton (1994, 89, n. 57).

[135] Cf. also Anthology of Planudes 4.305; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 64.22.

account features also Plato, who was also said to have experienced a metonymy epiphany featuring bees, as seen in chapter 1. Another passage from Planudes' Anthology combines the two topoi (the metonymy epiphany and the emphasis on the young age of their recipient) and portrays Plato as being visited by bees, the metonymic equivalent for the Muses, while still an infant in his mother's arms.[136] The same narrative piles on the traditional commonplaces by adding that Plato's metonymy epiphany took place on Mount Hymettos while his parents were offering sacrifices to the Muses. Sacrifices and festivals are, of course, equally ominous temporal contexts, most appropriate for divine epiphanies, as chapter 6 argues.

Musenweihe scenes appear to be common currency in the well-read and library-educated poets such as Callimachus and his contemporaries, while it is reduced to the level of literary cliché in the writing of the Roman poets of the Augustan age and beyond.[137] This high degree of stylization in later times should not blur our understanding of the contemporary perception of the scene. As the preceding discussion has shown, the pious majority of both Archaic and Classical Greece would not think of encountering a deity on a mountain as impossible, let alone as a literary construct. Images of well-established Archaic poets such as Archilochus and Anacreon confronting the Muses were very popular with artists of the Classical period, as we can tell from a series of vase paintings that date back to the first half and the middle of the fifth century. Momigliano went as far as to suggest that the story about Archilochus confronting the Muses was created in the fifth century judging from iconographical evidence of this kind.[138]

The story of Archilochus' encountering the Muses in the guise of nine women who worked in the fields comes down to us from a third-century BC inscription, also known as Mnesiepes' inscription.[139] A detailed narrative on the poet's first meeting with the Muses and poetry covers the greatest part of the inscription. The inscription was commissioned by Mnesiepes, who set up the poet's hero shrine in Paros in response to an oracle given by Delphi.[140] Mnesiepes appears to be a local historian in the league of Timachidas of Lindos and Syriskos of Chersonesos. His sources were previous local histories, oral tradition, national mythologies, and, as expected in any manifestation of the biographic genre, the poets' own surviving poems. Lines 22–41 of the narrative are worth quoting in full, since it is our

[136] Ael. *VH* 10.21: *Ὅτι τὸν Πλάτωνα ἡ Περικτιόνη ἔφερεν ἐν ταῖς ἀγκάλαις· θύοντος δὲ τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος ἐν Ὑμηττῷ ταῖς Μούσαις ἢ ταῖς νύμφαις, οἳ μὲν πρὸς τὴν ἱερουργίαν ἦσαν, ἡ δὲ κατέκλινε Πλάτωνα ἐν ταῖς πλησίον μυρρίναις δασείαις οὔσαις καὶ πυκναῖς. καθεύδοντι δὲ ἐσμὸς μελιττῶν ἐν τοῖς χείλεσιν αὐτοῦ καθίσασαι ὑπῆδον, τὴν τοῦ Πλάτωνος εὐγλωττίαν μαντευόμεναι ἐντεῦθεν.* The same story is told for John Chrysostom (of the golden mouth): Levi (1979, vol. 1, 357, n. 121).

[137] Commager (1967, 2–16).

[138] See Lefkowitz (1981, 38, n. 1 and 52–3 for Anacreon with the Muses), who quotes Momigliano (1971, 27–8).

[139] The name Mnesiepes means 'the one who remembers epic poetry'. See also Tarditi (1968, 5–6); Kambylis (1963, 129–50); Chaniotis (1988, 24–5); Williams (1994, 1–7); Brillante (1990, 7–20) with excellent commentary and bibliography; and Clay (2004, 104–9).

[140] Fontenrose (1978, H 74).

longest and most detailed poetic epiphany *in remotis*. More importantly, Archilochus' *Musenweihe* scene forms the closest parallel to the Hesiodic one:[141]

λέγουσι γὰρ Ἀρχίλοχον ἔτι νεώτερον
ὄντα πεμφθέντα ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς Τελεσικλέους
ἐἰς ἀγρόν, εἰς τὸν δῆμον, ὃς καλεῖται Λειμῶνες,
ὥστε βοῦν καταγαγεῖν εἰς πρᾶσιν, ἀναστάντα
πρωίτερον τῆς νυκτός, σελήνης λαμπούσης,
[ἄ]γειν τὴμ βοῦν εἰς πόλιν. ὡς δ' ἐγένετο κατὰ τὸν
τ̣όπον, ὃς καλεῖται Λισσίδες, δόξαι γυναῖκας
[ἰ]δεῖν ἀθρόας. νομίσαντα δ' ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων ἀπιέναι
α̣ὐτὰς εἰς πόλιν προσελθόντα σκώπτειν, τὰς δὲ
δέξασθαι αὐτὸν μετὰ παιδιᾶς καὶ γέλωτος καὶ
[ἐ]περωτῆσαι, εἰ πωλήσων ἄγει τῆμ βοῦν· φήσαντος δὲ
[εἰ]πεῖν, ὅτι αὐταὶ δώσουσιν αὐτῶι τιμὴν ἀξίαν.
[ῥη]θέντων δὲ τούτων αὐτὰς μὲν οὐδὲ τὴμ βοῦν οὐκέτι
[φ]α̣νερὰς εἶναι, πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν δὲ λύραν ὁρᾶν αὐτόν.
κ̣α̣ταπλαγέντα δὲ καὶ μετά τινα χρόνον ἔννουν
[γ]ε̣νόμενον ὑπολαβεῖν τὰς Μούσας εἶναι τὰς φανείσας
[καὶ] τὴν λύραν αὐτῶι δωρησαμένας· καὶ ἀνελό-
[μ]ε̣νον αὐτὴν πορεύεσθαι εἰς πόλιν καὶ τῶι πατρὶ
[τὰ] γενόμενα δηλῶσαι. τὸν δὲ Τελεσικλῆν ἀκού-
[σ]α̣ντα καὶ τὴν λύραν ἰδόντα θαυμάσαι·

They say that when Archilochus was still very young, he was sent by his father Telesikles to the countryside, to the deme called Leimones ('Meadows'), so as to bring an ox to the market; and that having got up very early in the morning, when the moon was still shining, he led the cow towards the city. But when he arrived at a place called Lissides, he thought he saw a crowd of women. He assumed that they were leaving the fields and going back to town, so he approached them and reproached them for doing so; but they welcomed him playfully and light-heartedly and asked him if he was taking the cow to sell it. And when he replied affirmatively, they said that they would give him a good price for it. Having thus spoken, both the women and the cow were no longer visible, but before his feet he saw a lyre. He was struck with amazement and only after some time, when he had regained his senses, he realized that the women who had manifested themselves to him were the Muses and that he was given the gift of the lyre. Having taken the lyre he made his way to the city and told his father what had happened. When Thesikles heard the story and saw the lyre, he was in awe.

The spatio-temporal context of the poet's meeting with the matron goddesses of poetry is once again heavily marked by interstitiality: the place is somewhere in between the city and the country; the time is at some point in the early dawn, when the day officially starts, but the moon is still shining and the whole scene is still imbued in darkness. The youthfulness of the recipient is once more underscored. As in the Hesiodic narrative, the Muses appear in what we called a functional metamorphosis, namely in the guise of a human being that the poet was more likely to meet in a place and a time like that. The recognition is not instant, as in many other epiphanic narratives. The sudden disappearance of the women points to their divine identity, which, however, requires verification from the Delphic oracle (40ff.). With regard to the epiphanic language of Mnesiepes'

[141] The text follows Tarditi's edition. Cf. also *SEG* 15:517.

account, the verb *phainomai* and its cognates appear twice: lines 34–5 and 37, while in 36 we find the participle *kataplagenta*; *kataplēxis* ('being struck with awe/amazement'; 'being astounded') is one of the standard reactions of the perceivers of epiphanic revelations, along with *deos*, *thambos*, *sebas*, *taphos*, etc. The Archilocheian epiphany, just like the Hesiodic one, is what Dodds calls a 'rapport epiphany': i.e. the deity appears to the perceiver, who after the revelation is left with a token, a visible mémoire of the divine visitation.[142]

Did Hesiod or Archilochus ever meet up with the Muses? For the purposes of this book this question is simply beside the point. These *Musenweihen* scenes are more indicative of the warm reception their poetry enjoyed over the intervening centuries and the unfailing admiration of both their synchronic and diachronic audiences. However, for those who are not tired of debating the veracity and historicity of Archilochus' revelatory experience, Herbert Rankin has a most pertinent answer: 'There is a sense in which it can never be entirely accurate to deny categorically that Archilochos met the Muses. He, and Hesiod, did think that they had contact with the Muses in a way, which was significant for them and their contemporaries.'[143] As far as the language of experiences is concerned, its formulaic and conventional character should not be interpreted as a sign of insincerity. Far from it. Formulaic language—and this is something self-evident for peoples endowed with long oral cultural tradition—is the communicative instrument that links the group with the individual.[144] Conventional language does not equate with artificiality. Hesiod's initiation may have become the archetype for being initiated into poetry, but he himself felt he was narrating an actual event. Hesiod, Archilochus, Pindar, Sophocles, and others fall more into the poet as pilgrim category, while later poets like Callimachus, Quintus of Smyrna, Ennius, Virgil, Horace, and Propertius fall into the poet as pioneer category, to use a distinction introduced by Steele Commager.[145]

Muses were indeed worshipped in the valley of Helikon and the idea that they could have been wandering on the slopes of the mountain distributing the gift of poetry to unsuspected shepherds, hunters, or travellers is certainly not Hesiod' s own invention. They had a cult and cult places of their own, they were worshipped and revered as any other member of the Greek pantheon.[146] More importantly, as John Press puts it: 'Theories of inspiration, which assume that the Muse endows her votaries with the gift of song, have one great merit, however rudimentary and clumsy they seem to a sophisticated audience. They recognize that in the poetic process, there is a mystery which cannot be airily dismissed and which must be humbly accepted before any theorizing can be attempted.'[147]

[142] Dodds (1951, 102ff.). Cf. here the epiphany of Asclepius to the poetess Anyte, as discussed in chapter 3, and chapter 8, 'The individual as recipient of epiphanies'. See also Platt (2011, 290–2).

[143] Rankin (1978, 15).

[144] For more on the authenticity of the Hesiodic vision and the function of the formulaic language see chapter 2 of Calame (1995b, 58–75).

[145] For this distinction and an excellent analysis of the related issues, see Commager (1967, 2–16).

[146] For more on the cultic realities behind Hesiod's narrative see the previous section 'Divine pluralities *in remotis*'. Cf. also Wallace (1974), who also notes that Mnemosyne, their mother, must have had a cult in the valley and adduces the discovery of a herm (*IG* VII 1782) inscribed with the word *Μναμοσύνας*.

[147] *The Fire and the Fountain*, 1955.

EPIPHANIES MOULDING *ARS POETICA*

Nonetheless, Greek deities who busied themselves with initiating into poetry unaware shepherds, hunters, travelers, and young boys on their way to the market did not confine themselves to the realm of those introductory lessons. Occasionally, or so our narratives tell us, they made themselves manifest to provide further thematic or stylistic guidance. Under the heading 'Epiphanies moulding *ars poetica*', I have grouped epiphanic revelations that do not mark the beginning of their recipients' literary career, but inform the quantity and quality of their literary production. These epiphanic revelations are different from the ones described in the 'Epiphanies initiating poetry' section in the sense that their recipients were already established artists when they met their 'divine agents'. By contrast, in the current group of poetic epiphanies, unlike those perceived by Archilochus or Hesiod, the divine literary agents seem to have gone far beyond introducing their mortal devotees into the mysteries of poetry; the poetic epiphanies discussed in this section aim at regulating their perceivers' poetic art. In Hesiod's and Archilochus' case, a shepherd gets transformed into a poet with some divine guidance and encouragement. The gift of the Muses in their case is not some sort of momentary inspiration, but the permanent gift of poetic ability.[148] On the other hand, in the epiphanies grouped here as moulding *ars poetica*, some deity (other than the Muses) manifests him/herself to express their interest in composing a specific poem, in initiating a specific literary genre, or even to encourage a specific publishing project.

This was the case, for instance, with Apollo who famously manifested himself to Callimachus to advise the poet 'to keep his Muse slender' and 'to drive his poetry through untrodden paths';[149] and that of Artemis who dictated Oppian's subject matter: hunting and hunters, of course.[150] Likewise, Pindar, Sophocles, and Alcman were said to have perceived epiphanies that shaped their literary production. Out of the three, Pindar once again seems to be the most popular with the gods. We have already seen that his biographers credited him with three different versions of a bees epiphany, which was essentially a metonymy for a Muses epiphany;[151] in addition to these, ancient biographers and scholiasts give us further information on four epiphanic revelations that the poet allegedly experienced at some point in his life: 1) Pan's, 2) Demeter and Persephone's, 3) the epiphany of the Mother of the gods, and 4) that of the hero Alcmaeon.[152]

'Pindar was not simply an ingenious poet, he was a man dear to the gods as well (ἄνθρωπος θεοφιλής),' says the author of *Vita Ambrosiana*.[153] To illustrate his premise further he recounts Pindar's encounters with Pan and Demeter:

[148] On the distinction see Murray (1981, 89–90).

[149] Call. *Aet*. fr. 1, 21–8 Pf. Cf. also the edition and commentary of Giulio Massimilla, *Aitia libri primo e secondo*, 1996, Pisa. In *AP* 7.41 Callimachus is called *synestios* (the one who feasts along with someone) of the Muses.

[150] Oppian *Cyn*. 1.16–23, 41–2 Mair.

[151] See chapter 1, 'Honey is for honeysweet poetry, bees are for honeysweet Muses'.

[152] Pan: Plut. *Non posse* 22.1103 A Westman; Plut. *Num*. 4.6 Perrin; *Vita Thom*. 4–11 Drachmann; Demeter and Persephone: *Vita Ambros. Pindari* 4–10 Drachmann; Pausanias 9.23.3; Mother of the gods: Scholia *ad* Pind. *P*. 3. 137b, p. 80.16 Drachmann; Alcmaeon: Pind. *P*. 8.56–60.

[153] *Vita Ambros. Pind*. 4–10 Drachmann.

somewhere between Kithaeron and Helikon Pan was seen singing the poet's paeans.[154] To reciprocate this sign of divine favour, Pindar composed a hymn to the god (fr. 95). We could not have asked for a better example of interstitiality; Pan manifests himself in between two *loci mirabiles*, each with a different specialization: the first specializes in madness, reversals, and transgressions, the transformation of shepherds into poets according to Himerius.[155] As for Demeter, she visited the poet in his sleep (*ἡ Δημήτηρ ὄναρ ἐπιστᾶσα αὐτῷ*) and reproached him for having neglected to compose a hymn in her honour. It was in accordance with that dream that Pindar composed a hymn, which began as follows: *Πότνια θεσμοφόρε χρυσάνιον* (fr. 37).

Pausanias offers a completely different account of the aetiology behind the composition of fr. 37: it was Persephone and not Demeter who visited the poet in his sleep and complained the same way Demeter had.[156] In an unfortunate twist of fate, Pindar died on the tenth day after the vision—the dream vision of Persephone, the mistress of the underworld equals death—and therefore did not have enough time to respond to the goddess's request. However, the pious poet was so determined to do his duty that he appeared in the sleep of an old relative (*ταύτῃ Πίνδαρος ἐνύπνιον τῇ πρεσβύτιδι ἐπιστὰς ὕμνον ᾖσεν ἐς Περσεφόνην*), who was well trained in the art of singing and sung the hymn to Persephone from the underworld! The old woman woke up and wrote down the hymn as she had heard Pindar singing it in her dream. Thus the *theophilēs* poet succeeded in fulfilling his religious obligations, even from beyond the grave.

Pindar features as the main reciepient of divine favour and inspiration in yet another poetic epiphany recorded by Aristodemos and preserved in the Scholia to his third Pythian.[157] The poet and his pupil Olympichus held their music class on a mountain, when the latter heard some terrible noise and saw a 'downward stroke of fire'; when Pindar himself became aware of his eerie surroundings, he saw the statue of the Mother of the gods walking towards him by moving its feet: *τὸν δὲ Πίνδαρον ἐπαισθόμενον συνιδεῖν Μητρὸς θεῶν ἄγαλμα λίθινον τοῖς ποσὶν ἐπερχόμενον*.[158] To reciprocate for this honour of witnessing this *effigies* epiphany (as we called it in chapter 1) of the Mother of the gods, Pindar erected a monument jointly to the Mother of the gods and to Pan near his

[154] Cf. *Vita Thomana* 4–11 Drachmann. Pan is found singing Pindar's first Olympian: *ἐτιμήθη δὲ σφόδρα ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων διὰ τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος φιλεῖσθαι οὕτως, ὡς καὶ μερίδα λαμβάνειν ἀπὸ τῶν προσφερομένων τῷ θεῷ, καὶ τὸν ἱερέα βοᾶν ἐν ταῖς θυσίαις· Πίνδαρον ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ θεοῦ. λόγος καὶ τὸν Πᾶνα εὑρῆσαί ποτε ᾄδοντα περὶ τοῦ Πέλοπος*.

[155] Him. *Or*. 66.45–65 Colonna.

[156] Paus. 9.23.3–4: *Λέγεται δὲ καὶ ὀνείρατος ὄψιν αὐτῷ γενέσθαι προήκοντι ἐς γῆρας· ἐπιστᾶσα ἡ Περσεφόνη οἱ καθεύδοντι οὐκ ἔφασκεν ὑμνηθῆναι μόνη θεῶν ὑπὸ Πινδάρου, ποιήσειν μέντοι καὶ ἐς αὐτὴν ᾆσμα Πίνδαρον ἐλθόντα ὡς αὐτήν*. 4 *τὸν μὲν αὐτίκα τὸ χρεὼν ἐπιλαμβάνει πρὶν ἐξήκειν ἡμέραν δεκάτην ἀπὸ τοῦ ὀνείρατος, ἦν δὲ ἐν Θήβαις γυνὴ πρεσβῦτις γένους ἕνεκα προσήκουσα Πινδάρῳ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ μεμελετηκυῖα ᾄδειν τῶν ᾀσμάτων· ταύτῃ Πίνδαρος ἐνύπνιον τῇ πρεσβύτιδι ἐπιστὰς ὕμνον ᾖσεν ἐς Περσεφόνην, ἡ δὲ αὐτίκα ὡς ἀπέλιπεν αὐτὴν ὁ ὕπνος, ἔγραψε ταῦτα ὁπόσα τοῦ ὀνείρατος ἤκουσεν ᾄδοντος. ἐν τούτῳ τῷ ᾄσματι ἄλλαι τε ἐς τὸν Ἅιδην εἰσὶν ἐπικλήσεις καὶ ὁ χρυσήνιος, δῆλα ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς Κόρης τῇ ἁρπαγῇ*. Pausanias' account seems more like the local, Theban version of the narrative, which was rejected by the Alexandrian scholars. See Bowra (1964, 48ff.).

[157] Schol. ad Pind. *P*. 3. 137b, p. 80.16 Drachmann.

[158] The statue was made of stone not wood; Bowra must have misread the text, when he writes (1964, 50): 'in the form of a wooden image'. Levi (1979, 361, n. 136) has the same mistake.

house.[159] Moreover, the poet was asked to perform or establish (the text is not clear) secret rites in honour of the goddess. Pindar took this oracle to heart and refused to visit Hieron at Syracuse in 473/4, because he had to conduct the prescribed secret rites, as he himself tells us in his third Pythian (77–9).

Pausanias saw next to the ruins of the poet's house a sanctuary of Mother Dindymene along with the monument mentioned in the narrative. The same author records Dionysus' epiphany to Aeschylus. The patron god of dramatic festivals visited Aeschylus when he was still a young man (*μειράκιον*) watching over, appropriately, some grapes.[160] The boy fell asleep and dreamt of the god ordering him to write tragic poetry. The next morning he decided to act in accordance with the dream vision and made his first attempt at composition. It is worth noting here that Pausanias tells us that this is how Aeschylus himself accounted for the fact that he started writing tragic poetry, unlike some other fables told by his biographers.[161]

Predictably enough, Sophocles also found himself included in the league of the *theophileis* poets. His privileged relationship with the divine is amply demonstrated in a continuum of epiphanic manifestations, which he experienced at critical moments in his life: when the golden wreath was stolen from the acropolis, for instance, Herakles Menytes visited the poet in his sleep and showed him where the stolen golden wreath was. As a result, Sophocles received the award and in return established a shrine in honour of the god.[162] Sophocles was also said to have provided *xenia* to Asclepius in his own house, before the god acquired his own dwelling, and for this reason received the cultic title Dexion.[163]

The gods did not abandon those dear to them even after their death, but continued to strive to establish their kudos and propagate the fame of their poetry. Such was the case with Sophocles, who according to an Attic tradition recorded by Pausanias, died when the Spartans were invading Attica.[164] That same day Dionysus was said to have appeared in the sleep of the Spartan general who led the attack against Attica to urge him to honour the new Siren (*καὶ σφῶν τὸν ἡγούμενον ἰδεῖν ἐπιστάντα οἱ Διόνυσον κελεύειν τιμαῖς, ὅσαι καθεστήκασιν ἐπὶ τοῖς τεθνεῶσι, τὴν Σειρῆνα τὴν νέαν τιμᾶν*). The prophetic statement was interpreted as

[159] For Pan as a devotee of the Mother of the gods see Pind. fr. 95 Snell & Maehler and Schol. *ad Pyth.* 3.139a. A joint cult of Pan and the Mother of the gods existed also in Lykosoura in Arcadia.

[160] Paus. 1.21.2: *ἔφη δὲ Αἰσχύλος μειράκιον ὢν καθεύδειν ἐν ἀγρῷ φυλάσσων σταφυλάς, καί οἱ Διόνυσον ἐπιστάντα κελεῦσαι τραγῳδίαν ποιεῖν· ὡς δὲ ἦν ἡμέρα—πείθεσθαι γὰρ ἐθέλειν—ῥᾷστα ἤδη πειρώμενος ποιεῖν. οὗτος μὲν ταῦτα ἔλεγεν·* Cf. Aristoph. *Frogs* 1259 (*τὸν Βάκχειον ἄνακτα*). According to Lada-Richards (1999, 242–3), Aeschylus as *Baccheios anax* may mean 'the master of the Dionysiac art of tragedy' or 'the poet who is possessed and inspired by Bacchus'.

[161] On Aeschylus and his biographies, see Lefkowitz (2012, 70–7).

[162] *Vita Sophoclis*, Testimonia A; Hieronymos fr. 31 Wehrli. Note, however, the caveats raised by Lefkowitz about how we should trust Hellenistic biography in the second edition of her *Lives of the Greek Poets* (2012, 8–86).

[163] *Et.Gen.AB* ~ *Et.Sym.V* ~ *Et.M.*256, 6 *Δεξίων*; and Plut. *Mor.* 14.22 (1103b). Compare here Marinus' *Vita Procli* 29, where the *dexiosis* of the god is called an *epiphaneia*. Plut. *Non posse* 22.1103 also marks clearly the *theoxenia* as an *epiphaneia* by including the event in a group of other epiphanic revelations. Cf. also Wickkiser (2008, 66–7) who follows Connolly and thinks of the tradition as a Hellenistic fabrication, which, in all likelihood, draws from the paean Sophocles wrote, whose title is attested on a third-century inscription, *IG* II^2 4510 = *SEG* 28.225. Cf. also Melfi (2010, 332–4).

[164] Paus. 1.21.1.

referring to the death of devout Sophocles. Both Pindar and Sophocles acquired heroic status after their death, just like Hesiod and Archilochus.[165] The heroic status that Sophocles acquired post mortem as recorded by his biographers is confirmed by two inscriptions that record celebrations and offerings to Dexion on behalf of the city.[166] As for Pindar, he was thought to dine along with Apollo in his temple in Delphi, or at least this is what the priest of the god used to proclaim each day, when he was closing the doors of the temple.[167]

Occasionally the gods appear not simply in order to state their stylistic, thematic, or generic preferences, but to reciprocate the honour for having been praised in a hymn. An actual epiphany is thus conceptualized as reciprocating for a poetic one. Remembering the gods in hymnic poetry is making them present.[168] This was at least the case with the epiphany of the Dioscuri to Simonides of Keos. Different versions of the narrative are to be found in many authors, but the older version of the story is to be found in the 'Princeton Simonides' papyrus (ed. pr. 2004).[169] It runs as follows: Simonides was dining at the house of a wealthy nobleman named Scopas at Crannon in Thessaly. There he chanted a lyric which he had composed in honour of his host, in which he included an encomium to Castor and Pollux; whereupon Scopas with excessive meanness told him he would pay him half the fee agreed, and if he liked he might apply for the balance to the sons of Tyndareus, as they had gone halves in the panegyric. A little later a message was brought to Simonides to go outside, as two young men were standing at the door (in Quintilian's version they are on horseback), who earnestly requested him to come out; so he rose from his seat and went out, and could not see anybody; but in the interval of his absence the roof of the hall where Scopas was giving the banquet fell in, crushing Scopas himself and his relations underneath the ruins and killing them.

[165] Pindar: Schol. *ad* Nem. 7.68a; Archilochus: Plut. *Num.* 4.6; Hesiod: Paus. 9.38.3–4 (Hesiod's bones are brought back to Orchomenos; the community is saved from the pestilence). On the hero cult of Archilochus in Paros see Clay (2004, 9–62). On the cults of other poets (including those of Homer and Hesiod in the Greek polis, see idem (2004, 63–97) and the appendix on pages 127ff. On Pindar's hero cult see Currie (2005, 147 and 303). There is no consensus as to whether the Heroxenia at Delphi attested in the scholia of Nemean 7 is the same as the Delphic Theoxenia festival. More on this in Currie (2005, 303, n. 42).

[166] *IG* II/III² 1252 = *Syll.*³1069; *IG* II/III² 1253. Connolly (1998, 20) argues that it is unlikely that the poet received heroic honours before the 330s and dismisses the story of Asclepius' *xenia* as 'Hellenistic fabrication'. As for the inscriptions, he thinks that they honour a separate local hero.

[167] *Vita Ambros.* 15–20 Drachmann.

[168] On the close link between divine presence and hymnic poetry see Bakker (2002).

[169] Page gives an account of these narratives under Simonides 510 *PMG*. We can single out the versions of Callimachus (fr. 64.1–14 Pf.), Quintilian (11.2.11ff.), and Cicero (*De Orat.* II, 86, 352–3). For 'The Princeton Simonides', see Kraut (2004, 1–5) with Tafeln I, II. I am grateful to Richard Rowles, who brought the papyrus to my attention. The papyrus is dated to the 2nd cent. BC. In verso l. 9 we read ἐπιφαν[. Rowels agrees with Kraut that the narrative must revolve around Simonides of Keos and the epiphany of the Dioscuri in the guise of two young man who save the poet's life. The other strong connection between the two stories is in line 6, where we read ἐπινικ[. Quintilian (11.2.1ff.) tells us that Scopas got angry because Simonides devoted half of an epinician ode for a victor in boxing to the Dioscouroi. For a digital reproduction and detailed discussion of the manuscript see Rawles (2005, esp. 62–3). This article is an edition of P. Princeton inv. AM87-59A with comment.

The pious Aelius Aristides in his *Hieroi logoi* informs us about three successive dream visions sent by Asclepius, Athena, and Dionysus respectively.[170] All three gods not only gave him some general guidelines on his thematic choices, but they even dictated certain lines to be incorporated into the hymns he should write! Asclepius is indeed an integral part of Aristides' literary production. First and foremost, the god is the commissioner of the whole work entitled *Hieroi logoi*.[171] However, in chapter 50 of book 4 Asclepius is imagined to be not simply the divine power that moves Aristides' hand, but also his divine co-author; or perhaps even more appropriately, the god is portrayed as a kind of divine editor, who has the power to cut and paste Aristides' text.[172] Correspondingly, Artemidorus felt obliged to specify that that his project was also the result of a spontaneous attempt to satisfy the Lydian Apollo Mystes, who often appeared to him in a dream and urged him to write his book: 'For the reader should realize that it was out of obedience to Apollo, the overseer god and guardian of all things, in addition to being my own native god, that I undertook this treatise.'[173]

Some seven centuries before, Socrates in the *Phaedo* said something similar to Kebes, when explaining why he composed a hymn to Apollo while in prison and why he used the fables of Aesop for his lyrics: he was frequently visited by the same dream vision that urged him to write music (*πολλάκις μοι φοιτῶν τὸ αὐτὸ ἐνύπνιον ἐν τῷ παρελθόντι βίῳ, ἄλλοτ' ἐν ἄλλῃ ὄψει φαινόμενον, τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ λέγον, 'Ὦ Σώκρατες,' ἔφη, 'μουσικὴν ποίει καὶ ἐργάζου'*).[174] Socrates took it to mean he should keep doing what he was doing, namely working on his philosophy. But after his life was temporarily saved because of the festival of the god (Socrates' death was postponed because the Athenians were celebrating the Carneia festival) he thought that the meaning of the recurrent dream vision might well be that he should compose what was commonly perceived as poetry (*τὴν δημώδη μουσικὴν ποιεῖν*). No doubt, the whole conversation with Kebes is not without ironic overtones and scornful remarks about poetic trends and fashionable poets. Nonetheless it taps back into the aforementioned cultural pattern of poetic talent being a synergetic product of profound religiosity and divine inspiration, which, more often than not, is the offshoot of recurrent divine epiphanies and conversing with the divine *in remotis*. 'I always feel as though I stood naked for the fire of the almighty God to go through me. One has to be so terribly religious to be an artist,' wrote D. H. Lawrence in 1913 in one of his letters to his close friend, the poet and illustrator Ernest Collings.[175] The Greeks seem to have been thinking very much along the same lines.

[170] *Or.* 50.36 Keil. On Aristides and his oneiric epiphanies, see Platt (2011, 260–5); Downie (2013a) and (2013b).

[171] *Or.* 48.9–10 Keil. More on this in Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 122–32).

[172] *Or.* 50.50 Keil: *τὰ δ' ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη, εἰ μὲν θέμις, εἰρήσθω καὶ γεγράφθω, εἰ δὲ μή, τοσοῦτον σοὶ μελήσειε, δέσποτα Ἀσκληπιέ, ἐπὶ νοῦν ἀγαγεῖν μοι διαγράψαι παντὸς δυσκόλου χωρίς.*

[173] Artemid. 2.70.

[174] *Phd.* 4.60e–61b. Note here that Socrates' dream figure took different guises in his dreams. The term *enypnion* here denotes more or less what the term *oneiros* does in Homeric poetry.

[175] *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, 1932, p. 109, letter to Ernest Collings, 24 Feb. 1913.

Dreaming of the gods *in remotis* and dreaming of poetry

Hesiod himself does not say anything about dreaming the Muses' visitation. He either saw the matron goddesses of poetry or heard their voices. In either case, direct mortal–immortal interaction was involved. The majority of the ancient interpreters, though, cast the Muses' epiphanic revelation in the sphere of dreaming, emphasizing thus the allegorical and symbolical character of the revelation and aligning Hesiod's extraordinary experience with a large number of other poetic epiphanies that were said to have taken place in the dreams of their perceivers.[176] As in the case of erotic and healing epiphanies, in poetic epiphanies too the divine chooses to visit the mortal men in their sleep. Sleeping and the subsequent dreaming provide the one necessary and adequate condition for all these kinds of epiphanic activity: privacy and one-to-one interaction. A visitation by a god in the course of a dream precludes further eyewitnesses, even if it takes place in cultivated land and in human settlements, as opposed to in interstitial epiphanic landscapes.

Of the poetic epiphanies discussed above, only those perceived by Hesiod, Archilochus, Pindar (with the exception of Demeter/Persephone's manifestation to the poet), Sophocles, and Simonides took place in waking reality. The rest of them were said to have occurred in the oneiric universe of their perceivers' sleep. Dreams, thus, proved to be a most effective medium of perceiving the divine and being inspired by it. Now, if we have a closer look at the combination of where these revelations took place, we shall find that their spatio-temporal context is heavily marked by liminality and ambiguity: Hesiod encountered the Muses on Mount Helikon; Archilochus saw them while travelling to the market place; Pindar saw/heard Pan somewhere between Helikon and Kithaeron, the Mother of the gods on a mountain, and the hero Alcmaeon while travelling on his way to Delphi. As for Sophocles offering *xenia* to Asclepius and the Dioscuri epiphany to Simonides, the first took place in a ritual context, which in itself is marked by liminality, the second during or right after Simonides' poetic performance.

In other words, when the mortal–immortal encounter takes place in a liminal epiphanic landscape, *in remotis* (e.g. on a mountain), loneliness and the absence of any further witnesses are usually already presupposed. It is within the confines of culture and civilized life that dreaming becomes essential for epiphanies (healing, erotic, and poetic) to happen: compare here Dionysus appearing in Aeschylus' sleep, while the latter is on cultivated land (vineyards). However, occasionally the two elements (i.e. dreaming and liminal landscapes) can be concurrent: a divine revelation may take place in the course of the dreams of the perceiver, who happens to be in one of the Greek *eschatiai*. All the metonymy bees/Muses epiphanies, for instance, combine these two elements.

SYNOPSIS

Villages and cities (human settlements in general) were considered to be relatively safe places, whilst mountains, meadows, rivers, seashores, springs, and caves were

[176] Cf. for instance Call. *Aet*. fr. 2; Tzetzes' *vita Hesiodi*; and esp. Fronto, *ad Caer*. 1.4.6.

traditionally perceived as places *in remotis*, that is as ominous places charged with interstitiality and ambiguity that invite divine epiphanies.[177] Poetic speech was perceived as a divine gift bestowed by the gods. Poetic inspiration was thought of as transmitted through epiphanies and poetry in turn created, or rather recreated, these divine manifestations by presenting them through the symbolic system of language. Epiphanic revelations, in a word, created poets and poets reciprocated by recreating the divine, by narrating these meetings with the supernatural. Poets were created by divine epiphanies and in turn the poets epiphanized the divine in their poetry, as they perceived it, either sensually or notionally. The narrative concerning the epiphany of Dioscuri to Simonides is perhaps the clearest expression of this general conception. In the bulk of our narratives the poet has just finished his performance and listened to Scopas' ironic comments, when the Dioscuri in disguise knock at the door. It is Simonides' performance that epiphanizes the Dioscuri!

The performative utterances (cf. for instance imperatives like ἐλθέ, εἴσελθε, φάνηθι, δεῦρο, ἔρπε, μόλε, ἐπινίσεο, κτλ) included in the invocation parts of cletic hymns, prayers, etc. aim at exactly that: to materialize a divine epiphany.[178] Moreover the epiphanic narrative, a constituent element of both cultic and literary hymns, creates per se a sort of 'legal precedent' for the god to appear again.[179] In that sense, poetry is the closest humans will ever be to the divine. Beautiful poetic narratives about the long vanished proximity between mortals and immortals (the golden age, where gods used to walk, interact freely, and even dine with the men) functioned as a constant reminder of that 'Paradise lost'. In an analogous fashion, the poet is also the closest a man can be to being a god. In the poet's universe this kind of long-lost proximity is recreated; it is their poetic language that makes the divine visible, audible, and even tangible both for their synchronic and diachronic audience.

Implicit in the concept of epiphanies authorizing the making of poets, prophets, and theological writers is the idea that witnessing the divine would enable these *theophileis* men to recognize it where, otherwise, it could have gone untraced, and describe it to the audience as truthfully as possible.[180] Encountering the divine body in person enables its perceiver to recreate it through the symbolic system of poetic language. For a poet or prophet to have encountered the daughters of Mnemosyne and received *aletheia* from them invests his poetic or prophetic diction with unsurpassable strength and validity.[181] Epiphanies, then, in a sense, bridge the gap between humans' limited sensory reception and the complexity and ambiguities that surround divine substance and morphology. These privileged individuals, by having been granted moments of extreme proximity with the divine, were raised above their fellow humans, so that they could, to an extent, communicate back to them what was normally thought of as incomprehensible, unperceivable, and, more importantly, as incommunicable.

[177] The same distinction between civic space and remote wild landscapes is very prominent in the narratives of the rural Greece of the 1960s, as collected by Richard and Eva Blum (1970, 341).

[178] Koch-Piettre (1996, 184): 'l'epiphanie se réalisait en des paroles performatives'. The standard work on hymns is the two volumes on Greek hymns by Furley and Bremer (2001). Cf. also Versnel (1981, 1–64). On cletic hymns (ὕμνος κλητικός) see Bremer (1981, 191–215).

[179] E.g. Sappho fr.1.5 L-P.

[180] The close relationship between the poet and prophet is not restricted to Greece or to the ancient world as a whole. Cf., for instance, C. Day-Lewis, *A Hope for Poetry*, 1945, 17.

[181] Detienne (1981, 105ff.) and Calame (1995b, 58ff.).

5

Erotic epiphanies

The spatio-temporal context of divine erotica

In the previous chapter, which examined epiphanic narratives that took place in the extra-structural space of the Greek *eschatiai*, I hinted at the fact that the same dangerous and interstitial landscapes often became the spatio-temporal context of erotic epiphanies. This chapter develops this aspect of *in remotis* epiphanies further and examines why what we called 'epiphanic landscapes' tend also to accommodate the *liaisons dangereuses* between mortals and immortals.

The term 'erotic epiphany' refers to narratives of amorous liaisons between divinities and humans, whether gods and mortal women, goddesses and mortal men, or homosexual relationships such as the abductions of Ganymede by Zeus and Pelops by Poseidon.[1] Narratives that relate the erotic epiphanies of male deities to mortal women generally follow two different scenarios: a god seduces a married woman (usually the wife of a king, priest, military leader, or other person of authority), often assuming the likeness of her husband; or a god seduces a virgin of distinguished parentage, often the daughter of a king. The main difference between the two scenarios is that whereas the offspring of god and married woman are often willingly adopted by the husband, those of god and unmarried girl are almost invariably subject to suspicion, criticism, and social isolation: the young mother's motives and integrity are questioned, and the product of the union is at times exposed on a mountain or in a cave.[2]

Narratives that relate the sexual union of a female goddess with a mortal male, on the other hand, most commonly recount the erotic abduction of a handsome youth by a goddess, such as that of Tithonus by Eos; or, less often, the seduction by means of persuasion and/or deception of a beautiful mortal (often described as god-like) by a goddess.[3] We have a detailed account of this type of erotic epiphany

[1] Zeus and Ganymede: e.g. *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 202–19; Poseidon and Pelops: e.g. Pind. *Ol.* 1.40–7. Interestingly, we have no instance of a liaison between a goddess and a mortal woman. This may be explained by the predominantly male authorship of these narratives or, more generally, by Greek male-centred attitudes towards sexuality. Some hints of female homoeroticism (viewed through the titillating lens of the male poet) may be found in narratives of the seduction of Callisto by Zeus in the form of Artemis (e.g. Amphis fr. 46 Kassel-Austin, Ov. *Met.* 2.401ff. and *Fast.* 2.153ff.). On Callisto, see Forbes Irving (1992, 202–5).

[2] There are, however, some important exceptions to this rule: see Hes. fr. 140 M-W; *Il.* 16.175–86; *Il.* 2.511–16; Hdt. 6.63.

[3] E.g. Aphrodite and Anchises: *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 56–7.

in the affair between Aphrodite and Anchises in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*.[4] In order to approach the mortal Anchises, Aphrodite assumes the likeness of a virgin, a functional metamorphosis that enables her to retain her beauty and simultaneously adjust it to her mortal lover's limited capacity for perceiving otherworldly beings. Despite their contradictory natures, their superficial similarity anticipates their physical union.[5] Although seized by desire (ἔρος), when Anchises sees the beauty of the figure before him and the wondrous light emanating from her clothes and jewellery (84–91), he infers that he is confronting a female deity. In an attempt to uncover Aphrodite's disguise, he addresses her in terms of cult worship, promising to dedicate an altar and to perform rich sacrifices, and prays that she might bestow upon him flourishing offspring and a long and prosperous life. However, his attempt to penetrate the goddess's disguise is thwarted by Aphrodite's persistent denial of her divinity. She fabricates a story (essentially another erotic epiphany narrative) that alludes both to rape (to encourage him to take sexual action) and to family life (to encourage him to consider their union in terms of procreation). She does not ask Anchises to dismiss his wonder at her presence, but instead invites him to hold Hermes and the other gods responsible for their meeting, as a clever way of implying divine intervention without explicitly referring to her own divine identity. Overwhelmed by desire, but only after much deliberation, the mortal unwittingly makes love to the immortal.[6] Nonetheless, when he wakes up from his post-coital sleep to the goddess's full epiphany, he experiences τάρβος and fears the loss of his manliness and sexual potency, and even for his life.[7]

Similarly, in a passage from Philostratus' *Heroicus*, Peleus is struck with fear at Thetis' arrival (ἔδεισεν ἥκουσαν).[8] This reversal of expected gender roles—the powerless male confronted by the powerful female—creates an anxiety that is absent from narratives that relate the stories of male gods taking pleasure in mortal maidens.[9] The goddess asks the mortal to be of good cheer (θάρσος ἧγε), and attempts to convince Peleus of the genuineness of her intentions and the intensity of her emotions by providing a number of mythological exempla that tell the story of similar mismatched unions between mortal men and divine women: Tithonus and Eos, Anchises and Aphrodite, and Selene and Endymion.

Scholars have tended to consider narratives of union between male gods and mortal maidens or youths as primary and those that include a goddess making love to a mortal man as secondary.[10] Indeed, fewer narratives involve goddesses and mortal men than gods and mortal men or women.[11] Yet the

[4] On which see Faulkner (2008, 1–18) and Richardson (2010 ad loc.) with bibliography.

[5] More in Bickerman (1976, 229–54), Smith (1981, 44) and Parry (1986, 253–64).

[6] ἀθανάτῃ παρέλκετο θεᾷ βροτός, οὐ σάφα εἰδώς. Van der Ben (1986, 19) aptly notes that 'It is difficult to decide whether οὐ σάφα εἰδώς is an expansion of the notion of βροτός "having no precise knowledge" . . . or serves as a qualification of παρέλκετο θεᾷ, "not clearly knowing what he did".'

[7] Manliness and potency: Giacomelli (1980, 13 ff.); his own life: Lenz (1975, 88 ff.).

[8] Philostr. *Her*. 729–30 Kayser; see also schol. (BDP) Pind. *Nem*. 4.81c (3.78.1 Drachmann) = *FGrHist* 3 F1a.

[9] Larson (2001, 83).

[10] E.g. Larson (2001, 65) and Cole (2004, 25).

[11] Lefkowitz (2002, 326), however, notes the greater popularity of erotic epiphanies involving goddesses and mortals (e.g. Eos and Cephalus or Tithonus), as opposed to erotic scenes involving male gods, on fifth-century Athenian vases.

number of narratives that relate the erotic exploits of goddesses with mortal men might be extended if, in addition to standard couples (such as Aphrodite–Anchises and Thetis–Peleus), we include narratives of unsuccessful attempts to rape a goddess (such as Iasion–Demeter, Ixion–Hera, Tityus–Leto),[12] as well as those other narratives where sex between mortals and a virgin goddess is hinted at but does not actually occur (such as Teiresias–Athena and Actaeon–Artemis).[13]

Erotic epiphanies tend to follow the same narrative structure as other forms of epiphany: a deity (or deities), disguised or undisguised, is perceived by a mortal in a dream or in waking reality. The mortal is deceived by the deity, or penetrates his/her disguise and usually experiences astonishment, awe, or terror (*τάφος*, *θάμβος*, or *δέος*). However, a characteristic peculiar to erotic epiphanies is that either the mortal or the immortal involved is described as having been seized by erotic desire (*ἔρος*).[14] Erotic epiphanies are accompanied by signs that are characteristic of other epiphanies: light/brightness, fragrance, great stature, and beauty. The source of light can be the divinity's eyes or hair, clothing and jewellery, or uncovered parts of the body (such as the bosom and the neck).[15] Occasionally this light is too intense for the human: Anchises has to look away when confronted by Aphrodite's full-scale epiphany.[16] Exquisite fragrance and dazzling beauty are amongst the most common *sēmeia* of an erotic epiphany.[17]

[12] Demeter and Iasion: schol. Ap. Rhod. I.916–18a (77.4 Wendel) = Hellanic. *FGrHist* 4 F23 = fr. 23 (Fowler), [Scymnus], *Perieg.* 679–89 = *GGM*, 22–223; Conon, *Narr. Const.* 21 = Phot. *Bibl.* 186.134a, Hes. fr. 117.8–12 M-W. See also Diod. Sic. 5.48, where Demeter is presented as the active agent who lusts after Iasion (*ἠράσθη*). Hera and Ixion: Pind. *Pyth.* 2.21–30, Schol. (L+) Ap. Rhod. 3.62 (218.21 Wendel); Leto and Tityos: Pind. *Pyth.* 4.90–2. On Tityos' being born by a mortal woman and reared by Gaia see schol. Ap. Rhod. 1.760–2b (65.20 Wendel) unde *Etym. Gen.* $A^{II}B$ s.v. *Ελέρα*.

[13] Athena and Teiresias: [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.6.7 (3.69, p. 126 Wanger); Pherec. fr. 92a Fowler, Call. *Hymn.* 5.51–84; Nonnus, *Dion.* 5.337–45, 20.399–402; Prop. 4.9.57–8. See also Nicander ap. Ant. Lib. 3.6.7, Ovid. *Met.* 3.316–38, Hyg. *Fab.* 75, schol. *Od.* 10.493 = Pherec. fr. 92b Fowler, Lactant. *Plac. Theb.* 2.95. Artemis and Actaeon: Hes. fr. 346 M-W = Philod. *De Piet.* 60G, [Apollod]. *Bibl.* 3.30–1, Diod. Sic. 4.81.3–5, Ovid, *Met.* 3.138–252, Paus. 9.2.3–4. In the earlier sources Actaeon is punished for wooing Semele, but from the fourth century he is associated with the bathing goddess theme, which Lacy (1990), combining literary and pictorial evidence, traces to the Archaic period. See also Forbes Irving (1992, 197–201). I have avoided detailed discussion of the sexual liaisons between Nymphs and mortal men or gods and Nymphs, on which see Larson (2001, esp. ch. 2).

[14] Anchises: *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 91; Zeus and Europa: Hes. fr. 140 M-W; schol. *Il.* 12.292; Mosch. 2. 89–91; Poseidon and Tyro: *Od.* 11.235–52; Poseidon and Pelops: Pind. *Ol.* 1.40–89.

[15] Eur. *Ion* 887–901; *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 85–90.

[16] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 182–3. See also Odysseus' epiphanic manifestation to Telemachus (*Od.* 16.155–89): the goddess restores the hero's youth, beauty, and radiance and dresses him in a clean white chiton; when suddenly confronted with this handsome stranger, Telemachus experiences awe and reverential fear that force him to turn his eyes away in a gesture of *aposkopein*, a typical gesture in response to epiphanic manifestations (*θάμβησε δέ μιν φίλος ὑιός, | ταρβήσας δ' ἐτέρωσε βάλ' ὄμματα, μὴ θεὸς εἴη*). Anchises' reactions to Aphrodite's full-scale epiphany are similar: *τάρβησέν τε καὶ ὄσσε παρακλιδὸν ἔτραπεν ἄλλῃ. | ἂψ δ' αὖτις χλαίνῃ τε καλύψατο καλὰ πρόσωπα*. On the gesture of *aposkopein* and its cultural significance see Jucker (1956).

[17] Hes. fr. 140 M-W; Mosch. 2.77–166.

EROTIC AND EPIPHANIC LANDSCAPES

Sexual unions between mortals and immortals can occur with mortal consent, but more often they take place without it.[18] When divine passion is not immediately consummated, the mortal object of desire is abducted.[19] Larson rightly thinks of abduction as 'the prerogative of the more powerful over the weaker'.[20] Abductees, whether male or female, are removed from their communities to a place where the divine can take pleasure in them undisturbed: Europa is taken to Crete, Orion to Delos.[21] Occasionally, the deity carries his beloved to Olympus to enjoy his sexual services for a brief period of time (such as Poseidon and Pelops), or for eternity (such as Zeus and Ganymede), thus causing grief and anxiety to those left behind.[22] We may note the sorrow caused to the families of Ganymede and Pelops when their sons were abducted by Zeus and Poseidon respectively. In compensation for his loss, Ganymede's father Troas received a pair of immortal horses and a detailed briefing on his son's fate, whilst Pelops was presumably endowed with the right to ask a sexual favour for himself, which he later exercised by winning over Hippodameia's hand with Poseidon's help. In abduction narratives, the verb ἁρπάζω or its cognates are used. Note that ἁρπάζω (meaning 'to steal', 'seize hastily', 'snatch up') is used both for gods lusting after mortal women and Nymphs and goddesses desiring mortal men.[23]

When the sexual union between a mortal and an immortal is consummated on the spot, then that spot tends to be either some watery location, or a mountain, or a cave. As seen in the previous chapter, in Greek thought mountains, forests, caves, rivers, and the sea all function as natural boundaries between civic territories. All these topographical features are seen as interstitial. They are peripheral, rather than central, associated with asocial, nomadic ways of living, as opposed to the integrated life of the civic community.[24]

Such epiphanic landscapes tend to facilitate the *liaisons dangereuses* between mortals and immortals. It is in a meadow (λειμών), while picking flowers, that Europa's seduction and subsequent abduction take place, and in the meadow of Lerna that Io's erotic dreams urge her to go to satiate Zeus's sexual desire.[25] It is at a spring (κρήνη) that Hylas is pulled down by a promiscuous Nymph, whilst

[18] Consent: Mosch. 2.77ff. and *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 53ff.; dissent: *PV* 640–57, Eur. *Ion* 887–901. On erotic violation and consent see Sourvinou-Inwood (1991, 68–70).

[19] Pl. *Phdr*. 229b–c.

[20] See Larson (2001, 66): 'Abduction (like the fulfilment of sexual desire) is the prerogative of the more powerful over the weaker: Olympian over Nymph, immortal over mortal, older over younger, and male over female, to the Greek way of thinking.'

[21] Hes. fr. 140 M-W; schol. *Il*. 12.292; [Apollod]. *Bibl*. 1.27.2.

[22] Poseidon and Pelops: *Ilias Parva* fr. 6 Davies, Pind. *Ol*. 40ff.; Zeus and Ganymede, Eos and Tithonus: *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 202–19.

[23] Boreas and Oreithyia: Pl. *Phdr*. 229b–c; Eos and Tithonus: *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 202–19; Eos and Orion: [Apollod]. *Bibl*. 1.27.2. The form ἔλετο (e.g. in *Od*. 5.121 said of Eos taking Orion as her lover) carries the same violent connotations. On the correlation of erotic pursuit, rapture, and marriage, and their wider cultural significance, see Sourvinou- Inwood (1991, 65–8).

[24] On the intermediate nature of the pastoral zone, in which epiphanies often take place see also Segal (1974) and Arthur (1983).

[25] Europa: Mosch. 2.77ff.; Io: *PV* 640–57.

Oreithyia's abduction takes place by the banks of the river Ilissos.[26] Poseidon makes love to Tyro in the likeness of the river Enipeus, and the river Spercheios' coupling with Polydora presumably takes place by the banks of the river.[27] Demeter mates with Iasion on a thrice-ploughed field.[28] Motte appropriately draws our attention to the sexual connotations that all these places had for the Greeks: terms for a small fertile piece of land with a water source in its immediate vicinity—like κῆπος (garden), λειμών (meadow), and πεδίον (plain)—can all function as slang words for female genitalia.[29] The fact that the same terms often define the spatial context of a male god's erotic epiphany to a maiden (a παρθένος or νύμφη) points simultaneously towards the sexual maturity and social vulnerability of these unmarried objects of divine eros. The word νύμφη, which denotes both unmarried adolescent girl and soon-to-be-married bride, carries the same ambiguity. Maidens who are abducted or raped by male deities may have reached the appropriate age for their sexual initiation into adult life, but nevertheless remain suspended in a liminal state between marriage and girlhood.[30] Liminality calls for epiphany. At the same time, a well-watered place is fertile, and making love nearby guarantees, in a sense, fruitful results.

Whereas erotic epiphanies involving women generally occur in fertile areas like meadows and riverbanks, those involving men often take place on mountains. We have already noted that the Greek ὄρος is an epiphanic landscape and that the hunters, travellers, and shepherds to be found there are prone to experiencing visions.[31] They are also more likely to witness divine erotica (a goddess bathing or Pan and satyrs having sex with Nymphs) or to partake in it.[32] Teiresias was hunting on Mount Kithairon when he unintentionally glimpsed Athena bathing.[33] Iasion was on Mount Ida when he met Demeter, and Endymion on Mount Latmos when he encountered Selene.[34] Anchises was pasturing his cattle when approached by Aphrodite.[35] In these narratives, emphasis is laid on the beauty and youthfulness of the mortal participants. Like adolescent girls, adolescent boys were also considered to be at a critical (and therefore vulnerable) time in their life cycle, suspended between boyhood and entry into the adult world. Awaiting their ritual initiation into the role of citizen and soldier, these youths are portrayed as

[26] Hylas: Ap. Rhod. 1.1228–39. In Theocritus' version (*Id.* 13.43–50) Hylas encounters not one but three Nymphs. Oreithyia: Pl. *Phdr.* 229b–229c.

[27] Poseidon and Tyro: *Od.* 11.235–52; Spercheios and Polydora: *Il.* 16.175–86, schol. (L+) Ap. Rhod. 1.1212–19a (111.3 Wendel), Pherec. fr. 8 Fowler.

[28] *Od.* 5.118–28. On the close correlations between sexual and agricultural fertility see Clarke (2001, 370–3).

[29] Eg. Archil. fr. 196a West, Aristoph. *Av.* 507, Lys. 88, Diog. 2.116, *Anth. Lat.* 885. See also Motte (1973, 12–53) and Rankin (1977, 57–73). In second-century AD medical texts, *nymphē* can also mean 'clitoris': see Ruf. *Onom.* 112 and Gal. *UP* 15.3.

[30] On the crisis of maidenhood see Blum and Blum (1970, 273ff.).

[31] Buxton (1992, 86–96).

[32] On the erotic relationships of Pan, Silens, and the Nymphs and their visual representation see Hedreen (1994, 47–69).

[33] Call. *Hymn.* 5.51ff. Actually, this particular epiphany combines two of the topographical features discussed above, occurring both on the mountain and in the spring where Athena bathes.

[34] Iasion: Ov. *Am.* 3.10.25; Endymion: Schol. Ap. Rhod. 4.57–8 Wendel.

[35] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 53–5.

engaged in activities that take place on the periphery of the Greek polis, such as hunting and pasturing.[36]

Erotic epiphanies also take place by the sea. Pelops invokes his former lover Poseidon while standing alone on a beach in the darkness.[37] Dionysus reveals himself to Ariadne on Naxos having emerged from the sea.[38] Erotic pseudo-epiphanies (in which a mortal is mistaken for a deity) also take place on the beach: Nausicaa encounters 'divine' Odysseus on the seashore, inspired to go there by a dream which subtly reveals her yearning for sexual maturation and its social corollary, marriage.[39]

Greek caves are also associated with divine erotica. It is notable that the word for cave (*σπήλαιον*) may also signify the human mouth and the female womb.[40] Pan and the Nymphs were often to be seen in caves in amorous liaisons.[41] Caves may both conceal illegitimate or unwanted children, or nurture infants (human and divine) by providing natural shelter for their mothers. Moreover, caves can conceal extramarital sex between mortals and immortals. It is in a cave on Mount Latmos that Selene has intercourse with Endymion, while Ion was abandoned in the same cave in which Apollo had lain with his mother.[42]

In contrast to these interstitial landscapes, affairs between gods and humans may be represented as taking place in the marriage bed itself. Alcmene shared her marital chamber with both Zeus disguised as Amphitryon and Amphitryon himself on the same night.[43] A similar situation cast doubt on the paternity of Demaratus, for in a single night his mother slept with both her husband and the hero Astrabacus, who had assumed his likeness.[44] Abbreviated versions of this type of erotic epiphany are the narratives of Poseidon sleeping with Tyro in the likeness of her lover (the river Enipeus) and that of Theagenes' mother sleeping with Herakles in the likeness of her husband.[45] How, then, could a woman be sure of the identity of the man with whom she shared her bed? The answer is simple enough. She could not. There were, however, certain indications of divine paternity, such as an unusual pregnancy and the ensuing child's supernatural qualities. Alternatively, the extraordinary circumstances of a child's conception may also point towards divine involvement: Zeus makes love to Alcmene for three successive days and nights, to guarantee a son worthy of his father![46]

[36] Ov. *Am.* 3.10.25. Fontenrose (1981, 252) argues that hunting 'represents freedom from civilised restrains upon sexuality', while simultaneously 'it is associated with chastity, virginity, and aversion to the other sex'. See also Detienne (1979, 25): 'The hunter's terrain . . . constitutes a space outside of marriage that welcomes deviant forms of sexuality or those that are simply considered shameful by the city-state.' On hunting in myth as a reflection of initiation into adulthood and sexual maturity, see Detienne (1979, 23–6), Burkert (1983, 58–72), Vidal-Naquet (1986, 106–28) and Sourvinou-Inwood (1991, 91).

[37] Pind. *Ol.* 1.40ff.

[38] See for example schol. (MV^{amou}+) *Od.* 11.322; Diod. Sic. 4.16.5; Plut. *Thes.* 20.1; Paus. 1.20.3 and 10.29.4. For a survey of Dionysus and Ariadne narratives, see Webster (1966, 21–31) and Calame (1990b, 106–16).

[39] *Od.* 6.13ff., esp. 33–5. [40] Duerr (1985, 273 n. 26). [41] Borgeaud (1988, 48).

[42] Endymion and Selene: schol. Ap. Rhod. 4.57–8; Apollo and Kreousa: Eur. *Ion* 887–901.

[43] Hes. *Scut.* 26–49. For an artistic representation of this narrative, see Schefold (1992, 72, fig. 26).

[44] Hdt. 6.68ff. cf. Ogden (1996, 252–62). [45] Paus. 6.11.2.

[46] Diod. Sic. 4.9.2. Compare here the well-known sixteenth-century Catholic notion that the Devil would creep into the marital chambers of respectable couples and, while the husband was already

Night and dreaming

Νύχτα γιομάτη θάματα, νύχτα σπαρμένη μάγια!
Dionysios Solomos, Ελεύθεροι Πολιορκημένοι, σχ. Γ' ὁ πειρασμός

Night and darkness in general, and nocturnal rites in particular, were thought to be an ideal setting for erotic epiphanies. In Euripides' *Bacchae*, Pentheus asks Dionysus about when and where his rites took place.[47] His reply, that for the most part they are performed at night, inflames Pentheus' suspicions. 'This is treacherous and corrupt for the women!' he protests.[48] Night and darkness are traditionally perceived as the standard context for both marital and extramarital sex. It is at night that Zeus makes his sexual advances towards Alcmene.[49] In Hesiod's *Theogony* (986–91), Aphrodite shares her bed with Phaëthon and transforms him into a nocturnal attendant of her temple.[50] Darkness accompanies Decius Mundus' sex stratagem (discussed further below, 'Sex stratagems'): the epiphany of pseudo-Anubis takes place only after the lamps of the temple have all been cleared away.[51]

Dreams may precede, follow, or coincide with an erotic epiphany.[52] It is in her dreams (*ὄψεις ἔννυχοι* and *νυκτίφοιτ' ὀνείρατα*) that Zeus attempts to lure Io into surrendering her virginity, so preparing the ground for the intercourse to follow.[53] In the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, the goddess has sex with Anchises while he is still awake, but reveals her true identity following his post-coital nap.[54] In this narrative, dreaming intercedes between sexual intercourse and ensuing conversation, in which the goddess gives instructions concerning their offspring. It is as if Aphrodite makes her partner fall asleep in order to put back on her divine garments and thus epiphanize herself in full majesty to her terror-stricken lover. Simultaneously, dreaming allows Anchises to recuperate from the erotic excitement and prepares him for the re-establishment of order: goddesses unite momentarily with mortals, but they certainly do not belong with them.

Poseidon's erotic epiphany to Tyro (*Od.* 11.243–7) complicates things a little bit: line 245 implies that intercourse starts while Tyro is still awake ('and he undid her maiden girdle'), but it actually takes place while she sleeps, for Poseidon pours sleep upon her before completing his 'acts of love', revealing his identity and giving instructions concerning the fruit of their union. Has Tyro simply dreamt of having sex with Poseidon? Line 245 was unknown to Zenodotus and rejected by Aristarchus, and the possibility of interpolation is raised by modern commentators.[55] It is tempting to read the narrative of Tyro and Poseidon as an abbreviated

asleep, have illicit sex with the wife when she on the point of surrendering herself to the arms of Morpheus (and therefore in an interstitial state). Such instances were gathered in the exorcist's legendary under the rather explicit heading *De erroribus nocturnis et de semine diabolorum*. These poor women were advised by priests to feel their husband's forehead to check for horns! Voltaire, for instance, was said to be a product of the union of a mortal woman with the devil. The tradition is also reported in Victor Hugo's 1866 novel *Les travailleurs de la mer*.

[47] Eur. *Bacch.* 485–7. [48] See Eur. *Hipp.* 106. [49] Hes. *Scut.* 26–49.

[50] Could this be taken as an allusion to permanent sexual services offered by the mortal to the goddess?

[51] Joseph. *AJ* 18.73–7. [52] See also Vermeule (1979, 152).

[53] *PV* 640–57. [54] *Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 170ff. [55] Schol. *Od.* 11.245.

form of erotic epiphany narrative, whereas that of Aphrodite to Anchises is a languorous, unhurried version. When fewer lines are devoted to the telling of a story, as in the case of the Homeric narrative, compression can result in confusion. At any rate, sleep in both narratives underscores once more the interstitiality of such unions, making them possible by mediating between objective and subjective experience.

In the Epidaurian Iamata (on which see chapter 3) we find a number of narratives that seem to hint at sex with the god for healing purposes.[56] In one, a man with a stone in his penis dreams of sex with a beautiful boy (an anthropomorphic manifestation of the god?), ejecting the stone through a form of wet dream. In another, a woman called Andromache dreams that a beautiful boy uncovers her, and that the god touches her with his hand: 'As a result a son was born to Andromache by Arybbas'. LiDonnici rightly maintains that the stress on the baby's paternity aims at eliminating any possibility that Asclepius is the father.[57] In a third narrative, a childless woman sleeps at the god's temple and dreams that a snake (a zoomorphic manifestation of the god?) 'lay on her belly and as a result five children were born to her'. In all three cases, the sexual contact with these otherworldly beings takes place in the course of a dream.

If we are to judge by the long section Artemidorus devotes to the interpretation of such dreams in his *Oneirocritica*, mortal dreams of sex with the gods were by no means rare in the second century AD.[58] To dream of sex with the gods heralds death for the sick man; for other people, it is auspicious if pleasurable, inauspicious if not. Oneiric sex with a virginal or maternal goddess (Hera, Hestia, Artemis, Athena, Hecate, and Rhea) forms an exception: it brings bad luck, whether or not it is pleasurable. Does that mean that to dream of intercourse with the divine was considered natural in Artemidorus' day? Suffice it to say that such dreams are discussed under the heading of unnatural (*παρὰ φύσιν*) sexual unions, along with dreams of having sex with oneself, with corpses, and with animals.[59]

Midday

On the whole, erotic epiphanies happen in the darkness of the night. There are, though, a few narratives in which divine revelations of a sexual nature take place at midday (*μεσημβρία*). Midday, as argued earlier, mediates between the rising of the sun and its setting; in this sense midday is an interstitial period of time, most appropriate for erotic epiphanies. To be more precise, erotic epiphanies take place in the light of midday, when they are related to pasturing, hunting, and travelling-activities that, as we have already remarked, are associated with interstitiality,

[56] *IG* IV^2 I, 121–2, 255, LiDonnici (ed.): A14; B11; B19.

[57] LiDonnici (1989, 109, n. 28).

[58] Artem. 1.80, p.76.

[59] Artemidorus distinguishes between three categories of sexual union: a) those that are legal, natural, and culturally accepted (*περὶ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν καὶ νόμον καὶ ἔθος*), b) those that are illegal (*περὶ τῆς παρὰ νόμον*), and c) sexual unions that are unnatural (*περὶ τῆς παρὰ φύσιν*). See also Alcman fr. 1.16–17 PMG ([*μή τις ἀνθ*]*ρώπων ἐς ὠρανὸν ποτήσθω* | [*μή δὲ πη*]*ρήτω γαμῆν τὰν Ἀφροδίταν*), where having sex with the goddess Aphrodite is equated to exceeding limitations that are innate to human nature and therefore committing hubris.

require light, and can hardly be performed in the middle of the night. Anchises' erotic encounter with Aphrodite, for example, must have taken place sometime around midday, if we are to judge from the fact that the post-coital sleep induced in Anchises by the goddess takes place late in the evening when the other shepherds come back from the pasturing fields (*H.H.Ven.* 168–9). No explicit reference to midday is made in our text though.

The only narrative where the reader is repeatedly and emphatically told that the erotic divine revelation took place at midday is of Teiresias' involuntary sight of Athena bathing. The light in this particular narrative is an essential prerequisite for three main reasons: a) young Teiresias is presented as hunting on Mount Kithairon and hunting does not generally take place after dark; b) light is essential for viewing the naked body of the goddess, which, again, would not have been possible in the middle of the night; and finally c) light highlights the contrast between pre-viewing vision and after-viewing blindness. Line 84 of the Callimachean hymn reads as follows: 'thus she spoke and night (*νύξ*) covered youthful Teiresias' eyes'. Perhaps the same holds true in Actaeon's case; maybe he unwillingly spied on bathing Artemis in the ominous hour of midday, since he too is presented as hunting on the mountain.[60] Generally speaking, however, midday appears more prominently in those narratives where either a goddess or a Nymph lusts after a mortal man and takes the initiative. Light as shed in the promiscuous hour of noontime is of crucial importance; it is essential for the viewing and the subsequent seduction or alleged seduction of the mortal man, whereas darkness better suits god-centred sex epiphany narratives. [61] Where the light of the sun is for one reason or another inappropriate, the seduction takes place in the moonlight: such was the case with Selene (the moon), who seduced Endymion when he happened to be hunting in the moonlight!

Temples, shrines, and festivals

Erotic epiphanies also occur in cultic locations such as temples and shrines, or during religious festivals: Asclepius' epiphanies, for instance, take place while his patients practise incubation at his Epidaurian sanctuary; Actaeon attempts to violate Artemis in her temple, according to a tradition reported by Diodorus;[62] and Homer's mother, according to a biographical tradition, experienced the erotic epiphany of a daimon as a maiden attending the Mouseia festival.[63] Nocturnal

[60] [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.30–1.

[61] Midday and erotic activity: see, for instance, Long. 1.24.1, where midday brings along sexual experimentation and eventually sexual awareness for the two young people. This close link of midday with sexuality is also to be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where erotic epiphanies take place almost invariably in the heat of midday: e.g. Jupiter and Callisto (*Met.* 2.401–7); Artemis and Actaeon (*Met.* 3.141–250). On midday as a dangerous and distinctively epiphanic hour cf. also Kambylis (1965, 59–61), Friedman (1966, 22–9), Papanghelis (1989, 54–61), Bremmer (2002, 128). On midday and midnight as dangerous periods in rural parts of modern Greece, see Blum and Blum (1970, 141–2); on midday/midnight and liminality, see Yatromanolakis and Roilos (2004, 25–6).

[62] Diod. Sic. 4.81.3–5.

[63] [Plut.] *Vit. Hom* 1.3. As seen in chapter 4, the Mouseia was held by the Thespians on Helikon in honour of the Helikonian Muses.

rites were also associated with illicit sex and extramarital pregnancies: Alpheus, when infatuated by Artemis, decided to take her by force during a *pannychis* in honour of the goddess and the Nymphs at Letrinoi in Elis.[64] Xouthos speculates that Ion's conception must have been conceived during the Phanai, a Bacchic festival—not to mention all those girls in New Comedy who fall pregnant during a *pannychis*.[65]

Herodotus reports an interesting tradition about the Spartan king Demaratus involving the erotic epiphany of the hero Astrabacus, whose shrine was situated near his house:[66]

> Ὡς με ἠγάγετο Ἀρίστων ἐς ἑωυτοῦ, νυκτὶ τρίτῃ ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἦλθέ μοι φάσμα εἰδόμενον Ἀρίστωνι, συνευνηθὲν δὲ τοὺς στεφάνους τοὺς εἶχε ἐμοὶ περιετίθει. Καὶ τὸ μὲν οἰχώκεε, ἦκε δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα ὁ Ἀρίστων. Ὡς δέ με εἶδε ἔχουσαν στεφάνους, εἰρώτα τίς εἴη ὅ μοι δούς. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἐφάμην ἐκεῖνον· ὁ δὲ οὐκ ὑπεδέκετο· ἐγὼ δὲ κατωμνύμην, φαμένη αὐτὸν οὐ καλῶς ποιέειν ἀπαρνεόμενον· ὀλίγῳ γάρ τι πρότερον ἐλθόντα καὶ συνευνηθέντα δοῦναί μοι τοὺς στεφάνους. Ὀρέων δέ με κατομνυμένην ὁ Ἀρίστων ἔμαθε ὡς θεῖον εἴη τὸ πρῆγμα. Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν οἱ στέφανοι ἐφάνησαν ἐόντες ἐκ τοῦ ἡρωίου τοῦ παρὰ τῇσι θύρῃσι τῇσι αὐλείῃσι ἱδρυμένου, τὸ καλέοντι Ἀστραβάκου, τοῦτο δὲ οἱ μάντιες τὸν αὐτὸν τοῦτον ἥρωα ἀναίρεον εἶναι. Οὕτω, ὦ παῖ, ἔχεις πᾶν ὅσον τι καὶ βούλεαι πυθέσθαι· ἢ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ ἥρωος τούτου γέγονας καί τοι πατήρ ἐστι Ἀστράβακος ὁ ἥρως, ἢ Ἀρίστων· ἐν γάρ σε τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ ἀναιρέομαι.
>
> On the third night after Ariston brought me to his house, I was visited in my room by a *phasma*, which looked like Ariston. The *phasma* slept with me and afterwards took the wreath he had and put it around me. And as soon as he did that, he vanished, and Ariston came right after that. As he saw me wearing the wreath, he asked me who had given it to me. And I replied he had done that himself. But he did not admit it. Then I started swearing solemnly, making clear that he was not doing the right thing by denying the whole thing. For he had come to me only a while ago and slept with me and given me the wreath. But when he saw that I swore solemnly, Ariston realized that the whole affair was to do with the divine. Moreover, the wreath had manifestly come from the heroon, which lies by the courtyard gate, which is also known as the heroon of Astrabacus, and when we asked the diviners, they replied that the hero himself was the one [who visited me]. There you are, my son, now you know everything you want to know. For truly, you are the son of either the hero Astrabacus, or Ariston. For that was the night I became pregnant with you.

When his political enemy Leotychides declared upon oath that Demaratus was not the son of Ariston, the former king of Sparta, and therefore had no right to the throne, he provoked great political upheaval. The Spartans decided to consult Delphi on the matter, while Demaratus begged his mother to reveal his true

[64] Paus. 6.22.9. In addition, nocturnal rites provide the ideal coverage for incest, as suggested by the myths of the Paphian king Cinyras, seduced by his daughter while he lay drunk on his bed during the annual festival of Ceres (Ov. *Met*. 10. 299–478; [Apollod.] *Bibl*. 3.14.4) and Eurotas, who raped his own sister Cleodice by mistake in a *pannychis* ([Plut.] *Fluv*. 17.1). Compare Pamphilia who is violated in the Tauropolia festival in Menander's *Epitrepontes*, or the woman in his *Phasma*, who is in all probability raped during the Dionysia; see Post (1940) and Murray (1943) for an exhaustive catalogue of rape and sex during the New Comedy *pannychis*. See also Ael. *NA* 7.19.12–15.

[65] Eur. *Ion* 543–60 and 887–901; cf. also Eur. *Bacch*. 26–31.

[66] Hdt. 6.69. See Rohde (1925, 137): 'The heroön of this Astrabakos was situated by the door of Ariston's house, and it was a frequent custom thus to place a Hero's shrine before the house-door where he might give a special protection to his neighbour.' See also Paus. 3.16.9.

father's identity. His mother's reply was a complex amalgam of an epiphany narrative and a medical analysis of her unusual pregnancy: on the third night of her wedding to Ariston, the *phasma* of a dead hero, Astrabacus, had visited her in the guise of her husband. The hero made love to the woman and left some crowns as a sign of gratitude: *ἦλθέ μοι φάσμα εἰδόμενον Ἀρίστωνι, συνεννηθὲν δὲ τοὺς στεφανοὺς τοὺς εἶχε ἐμοὶ περιετίθεε*. When her husband Ariston returned to his house he found out that his wife had already slept with someone else in his likeness. When his wife protested her innocence and insisted on the veracity of her version, he concluded that his doppelgänger must have been divine. Judging from the floral crowns that she was given for her services (which according to the oracle had come from the shrine of the hero Astrabacus), Demaratus' mother concluded that the hero must have paid a visit to her connubial bed.[67] Conveniently, no allegations of illegitimacy could be made about Demaratus: he was either his father's son or the son of the hero Astrabacus, for his mother shared her bed with both of them on the same night.[68]

Moving on now from a *hapax* (one-off) erotic epiphany—which nonetheless had profound and long-lasting political repercussions for both Demaratus himself and his fellow Spartans—to a periodic erotic epiphany, which was celebrated annually as part of the Athenian festival of Anthesteria: the union of Dionysus with the wife of the Athenian archon basileus, the *βασίλιννα* or *βασίλισσα*.[69] This erotic epiphany firmly embedded in a cultic context (hence the recurrence) may have been modelled on the mythical erotic union of Dionysus and Ariadne.[70] Narrative accounts of this union are rare, for the ritual acts performed by the

[67] The mortal woman is often given wreaths of flowers as a gift. Cf. here the wreaths Tyro receives after sharing Poseidon's bed (*Od.* 11.235–52); and the *karchēsion* (a very old type of cup), which was given to Alcmene by Zeus for her services (Pherec. *FGrHist* 3 F 13 a; Herod. of Heracleia *FGrHist* 31 F 16).

[68] Note the expression *οἱ στέφανοι ἐφάνησαν ἐόντες* in the Herodotean narrative, which in this context suggests that the crowns 'proved to be' or 'were plainly seen' to have come from the hero's shrine. The emphasis is laid on the visual token of the dead hero's trust with Demaratus' mother.

[69] See Bremmer (1999, 49) with more bibliography.

[70] There is a debate as to which myth (if any) this may have been. In the Classical period the Basilinna's secret rites were associated with Dionysus' union with Ariadne on Naxos: see Paus. 1.20.3 and 10.29.4; and Diod. Sic. 5.51.4 with Otto (1956, 83–5), Burkert (1983, 232–8), Simon (1983, 96–8), Calame (1990b, 248–50), and Seaford (1994b, 267–9; 2004: 83–4). On the myth, see schol. (MV^{amou}+) *Od.* 11.322, Pherec. *FGrHist* 3 F148=F148a and **b Fowler, Diod. Sic. 4.16.5, Plut. *Thes*. 20.1 and Paus. 1.20.3, 10.29.4. The scene is enacted at the end of Xenophon's *Symposium* 9.2–7. However there is some scepticism as to whether Theseus' surrendering of Ariadne to Dionysus on Athens' orders can be viewed as the archetype for annual ritualized surrender of the archon basileus' wife to the god during the Anthesteria: see Jameson (1993, 54–7), Parker (2005, 303–5), and Seaford (2006, 18–19). Parker and Seaford favour an Attic equivalent of Dionysus' *xenismos* by King Oeneus as the mythic model for the Athenian ritual. In Eur. *Cycl.* 38–40, Hyg. *Fab*. 129, and [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.8.1, Dionysus is entertained the house of Oeneus and falls in love with his wife Althaea. As soon as Oeneus realizes the god's desire he finds a pretext to leave the couple alone. Deianeira becomes the fruit of their union. Having enjoyed such 'generous' hospitality, the god reciprocated by unveiling the mystery of vine cultivation and wine production to Oeneus. An alternative mythic model is that of Orion, Oinopion, and Merope, as found in Erat. *Cat*. 1.32, [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.25–7 and Pind. Frr. 72–4 Snell & Maehler: see Seaford (2006, 83 n. 69).

Basilinna on behalf of the city belonged to the *ἄρρητα*, the 'unspeakable rites';[71] while the iconographical evidence of this erotic union (more on which below) has provoked controversy amongst the scholarly community. Both literary and pictorial representations of marriage between the god and the Basilinna accord with the following schema: during the three-day festival of the Anthesteria, a marriage procession (*πομπή*) took place from the sanctuary of Dionysus at the Marshes to the Boukoleion, the residence of the archon basileus, where the marriage between the mortal queen and the god was somehow consummated, though the details and the exact time of the rite are not known.[72] Avagianou argues in favour of the night between Choes and Chytroi, a suggestion that is consistent with the predominance of night and dreaming in erotic epiphany narratives, and is supported by visual representations of the scene.[73]

Iconographically, the union between Dionysus and the mortal wife of the archon basileus almost invariably takes place in the presence of torches and torchbearers.[74] Beazley thought that the famous calyx krater from Tarquinia (Fig. 5.1) pictured precisely that, Dionysus' visit to the Basilinna.[75] The Basilinna is portrayed sitting on the bridal bed behind the doors of the Boukoleion, awaiting her divine groom. On the building's threshold a satyr, who acts as a bridal doorkeeper (*θυρωρός*), greets a satyriskos who holds a torch and a *chous* and

[71] See [Dem.] 59, 73–80, Arist. *Pol.* 3.5 and Hsch. s.v. *Διονύσου γάμος*. It has been argued that Aristotle's description of the ritual (esp. *ἔτι καὶ νῦν γὰρ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως γυναικὸς ἡ σύμμειξις ἐνταῦθα γίγνεται τῷ Διονύσῳ καὶ ὁ γάμος*) does not denote sexual union between Dionysus and the Basilinna but a 'ceremonial meeting': see Wilhelm (1930/1974, 28–30) followed by Rhodes (1981, 104–5), Jameson (1993, 55, n. 23), and Parker (2005, 304–4, n. 58). Jameson emphasizes the union's conjugal aspect in contrast to Dionysus' unbridled sexuality in other festive contexts. Though we can only speculate about the details, it is unlikely that the official civic union (*γάμος*) would be conceptually distinct from the sexual union of god with mortal, given the close association of marriage and procreation. Those who prefer to associate the ritual with Dionysus' union with Ariadne might look to Xenophon's *Symposium*, where the girl who plays Ariadne enters Dionysus' *thalamos* dressed as a bride. Opinion is divided as to who plays the role of Dionysus in the actual ritual, ranging from the herm of Dionysus Limnaios and the Archon Basileus himself to the priest of Dionysus: see Avagianou (1991, 177–9) for an exhaustive discussion of the issue. I am convinced by Simon (1983, 6–22) that the priest of Dionysus took the god's role, for the additional reason that priestly identification with the deity is important to many erotic epiphanies. According to Ps. Apollodorus, Io was Hera's priestess when violated by Zeus ([Apollod]. *Bibl.* 2.5.3–8), while Theaganes' father Timosthenes was a priest of Herakles when his wife made love to a *phasma* of the hero in the likeness of her husband (Paus. 6.11.2). Plutarch also mentions that 'after having been carried by the sailors to Naxos, Ariadne went to live with Onarus, who was the priest of Dionysus' (Plut. *Thes.* 20.1).

[72] On the Anthesteria in general, see Deubner (1932, 230–8), Parke (1977, 110–13), Simon (1983, 96–7), and more recently Humphreys (2004, 223–75) and Parker (2005, 290–316).

[73] Avagianou (1991, 177–9). In most of these vase paintings, it is impossible to distinguish between the scenes that depict the mythical paradigm and those that portray the ritual union of Dionysus with the mortal queen.

[74] See for example the so-called Choes pitcher in New York, MM 06.1021.183, fourth century BC = *LIMC* 'Dionysus' no. 781.

[75] *ARV*^{2} 1057, 96; *CVA* (2), Italia 26, III 1 Taf. 16,1.2. Others argue in favour of a typical wedding ceremony, perhaps elevated to the mythical level: see Simon (1983, 97), Avagianou (1991, 189), and Hedreen (1992, pl. 18 A). More recent discussions of the scene in Angiolillo and Giuman (2007, 182, fig. 13 A) and Kaltsas and Shapiro (2008, 271, fig. 2 A). Cf. also *LIMC* s.v. 'Dionysos', n. 824 and 'Ariadne', n. 110.

Fig. 5.1. The calyx krater from Tarquinia, dated to *c.*475–425 BC, Museo Nazionale Tarquiniense RC4197.

announces the arrival of Dionysus. On a *chous* from Moscow a woman identifiable as the Basilinna by the ivy and the thyrsos in her left hand is depicted either in a state of drowsiness or sleeping on a *klismos*.[76] In either case, she is waiting for her union with Dionysus, whose presence is indicated by the ivy and the satyr present in the scene. Lezzi-Hafter maintains that the scene depicts the Basilinna in a liminal state, practising 'ritual sleep' to prepare herself for union with her immortal lover. According to this interpretation, the cultic iconography closely follows mythic narratives, in which Ariadne is usually presented as asleep (*καθεύδουσα*) when Dionysus arrives from the sea.

[76] Moscow, Puschkin Museum, M-1360.1975 from the Methysos painter dated *c.*430 BC. See Lezzi-Hafter (1988a, 210, fig. 196a).

In the cultic union of Dionysus and the wife of the archon basileus, a ritualized erotic epiphany forms an important part of a major civic festival: the whole city agrees to give a local woman to the god to enjoy. This ritually enacted union, in which agency lies with the polis itself, provides a striking contrast to the anxiety generated by the random and unpredictable sexual misconduct of male gods towards the female citizens of Cloud-Cuckoo-Land, as described in lines 556–60 from Aristophanes' *Birds*:

καὶ τοῖσι θεοῖσιν ἀπειπεῖν
διὰ τῆς χώρας τῆς ὑμετέρας ἐστυκόσι μὴ διαφοιτᾶν,
ὥσπερ πρότερον μοιχεύσοντες τὰς Ἀλκμήνας κατέβαινον
καὶ τὰς Ἀλόπας καὶ τὰς Σεμέλας· ἤνπερ δ' ἐπίωσ', ἐπιβάλλειν
σφραγῖδ' αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὴν ψωλήν, ἵνα μὴ βινῶσ' ἔτ' ἐκείνας. 560

and prohibit the gods
from passing to and fro through your territory with their cocks up,
in the way they used to come down previously to debauch their Alcmenas
and their Alopes and their Semeles. And if they do violate your borders,
then put a seal on their skinned pricks, so they can't screw those women any more.[77]

Stories about the sexual liaisons between mortals and immortals were common enough for comic wit. Peisetaerus is thinking here of erotic affairs analogous to the one depicted in Figure 5.2, a scene from a *Phlyax* play.[78] Zeus carries a ladder in an attempt to visit one of his mortal lovers.[79] The scene on this vase probably represents Zeus visiting Alcmene, wife of Amphitrion, who appears at the window. Hermes holds up a lamp at the right.

It might come as a surprise that the hero Peisetaerus includes dissuading the gods from violating the city's women among the necessary measures the citizens of Cloud-Cuckoo-Land should take to ensure the foundation of the new city and its future prosperity.[80] However, as we shall see in the final section of this chapter, imposing restrictions on procreation and regulating contact with the sexually voracious male gods is primarily a way of controlling the part of the civic population that was charged with both its numerical increase and the perpetuation of its civic values: the women of the city. In effect, censoring erotic interaction between the divine aggressors and their victims becomes yet another way of exercising political control. But how are we to imagine these mortal–immortal unions? What guise did these male and female divinities acquire to mingle sexually with the objects of their desire?

[77] Trans. Sommerstein (1987, 79).

[78] *Phlyax* (*φλύαξ*) plays were peculiar to the Greek settlements of the fourth century BC in Southern Italy. The actors, dressed in humorous costumes, burlesque the adventures of gods and heroes. For more information on the *Phlyax* plays, see A. D. Trendall, *Vasi antichi dipinti del Vaticano: Vasi italioti ed etruschi a figure rose, fasc. I, Citta del' Vaticano*, 1953, 27–9 and K-A vol. I, 257–88.

[79] More on this vase painting in Hart (2010, 121, fig. 58).

[80] Other measures included encircling their city with a great wall, demanding sovereignty from Zeus, and declaring a sacred war against him in case he refuses.

Fig. 5.2. Hermes helps Zeus to enter the home of one of his lovers, probably Alcmene. The painting is attributed to Aestas. Red-figure bell krater dated to *c*.350–325 BC, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco, inv. no. 17106.

FORM AND TRANSFORMATION

Most often, divinities assume anthropomorphic guise when enjoying sexual intimacy with mortals, as demonstrated by those narratives in which a god takes the likeness of a woman's husband or lover.[81] Alternatively, a god may assume a zoomorphic likeness. Zeus is particularly imaginative in this respect: he abducts Europa in the likeness of a bull and makes love to Leda and Nemesis in the form of

[81] E.g. Zeus (in the likeness of Amphitryon) and Alcmene: Hes. *Scut*. 26–56 Solmsen; schol. (CMV^{amou}X) *Od*. 11.266, Isocr. 10.59, Athen. *Deipn*. 11.474f. = (Pherec. *FGrHist* 3 F 13a= Pherec. fr. 13a Fowler), and Macrob. Sat. 5.21.3 (337.1 Willis). Poseidon and Tyro: *Od*. 11.235–52.

a swan.[82] The same god was said to have sired many heroes, such as Aratus from Sicyon, in the form of a snake; most famously, it was in the same form that Zeus Ammon was said to have fathered Alexander the Great.[83] At other times, gods manifest themselves in the form of natural elements such as fire, rain, light, a thunderbolt, or a star (more on these amorphous epiphanies in chapter 1). Zeus, as the weather god, appears in the form of physical elements closely associated with his divine nature. He mates with Semele in the form of a thunderbolt, with Danae in the form of golden rain, and with Leda or Nemesis in the likeness of a star.[84] Pseudo-Apollodorus tells us that Iphimedeia, who fell in love with Poseidon, used to go to the seashore, take up seawater in her hands and pour it in her womb. In this form the god fathered Aloadae, Otus, and Ephialtes.[85] A deity might also unite with a human lover in the form of a *phasma* (on which see chapter 1). Herakles' *phasma* unites with Theagenes' mother; Thetis' *phasma* makes love to Peleus; the *phasma* of the hero Astrabacus impregnates Demaratus' mother; and according to the Samothracian tradition, Demeter's *phasma* was violated by Iasion.[86]

Transformation, then, seems to have been essential for divinities to engage in sexual relations with mortals.[87] The union of two such fundamentally different beings required at least some modification of their true nature, and responsibility for protecting the more vulnerable partner, the mortal lover, rested with the gods. This fact, of course, ties neatly with what I called functional metamorphosis in chapter 1. In a number of erotic epiphanies, however, it is the mortal who undergoes transformation. We might interpret such metamorphosis as an externalized psychological reaction to such a traumatic and emotionally charged event; such intimate encounter with the divine necessarily engenders profound change in those who experience it, as demonstrated by Semele's death and Teiresias' blindness. In Pseudo-Apollodorus' version of the myth, Io's metamorphosis into a cow is depicted as the inevitable consequence of such a traumatic and emotionally powerful experience as sleeping with an otherworldly entity.[88] Blindness, in particular, is often incurred as punishment for witnessing divine erotica. Erymanthus, Apollo's son, was blinded because he saw Aphrodite bathing after her sexual union with Adonis, while there was a tradition that Philip of Macedon

[82] Isocr. 10.59: *Ἀμφιτρύωνι μὲν γὰρ εἰκασθεὶς ὡς Ἀλκμήνην ἦλθεν, χρυσὸς δὲ ῥυεὶς Δανάῃ συνεγένετο, κύκνος δὲ γενόμενος εἰς τοὺς Νεμέσεως κόλπους κατέφυγεν, τούτῳ δὲ πάλιν ὁμοιωθεὶς Λήδαν ἐνύμφευσεν.*

[83] Aratus: Paus. 4.14.7–8; Alexander: Justin, *Epit.* 11.11; Paus. 4.14.7–8, Plut. *Alex.* 3.1–4, and Arr. *Anab.* 3.3.2. We may remind ourselves here that Artemidorus classifies dreams of sex with animals together with dreams of sex with deities.

[84] Semele: e.g. Diod. Sic. 3.64.3–5; Danae: Isocr. 59. The schol. Ap. Rhod. 4.1091 (305.12 Wendel) is even more explicit: *ἐρασθεὶς δε Ζεὺς τῆς παιδός, ἐκ τοῦ ὀρόφου χρυσῶ παραπλήσιος ῥεῖ, ἡ δὲ ὑποδέχεται τῶ κόλπω . καὶ ἐκφήνας αὐτὸν ὁ Ζεὺς τῆ παιδὶ μίγνυται.* Leda and Nemesis: Clem. *Rom. hom.* 5.13, Tzetz. in Lyk. *Al.* 88.

[85] [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.53.1.

[86] Herakles: Paus. 6.11.2; Thetis: Philostr. *Her.*729–30; Astrabacus: Hdt. 6.68–9. More on the topic in Avagianou (1991, 170–1), with full documentation of the sources.

[87] The metamorphic nature of erotic epiphanies became a central theme for both Ovid and Apuleius in their respective *Metamorphoses*, on which see Forbes Irving (1992).

[88] Io transformed into a cow: *PV* 640–57, [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 2.1.3.1; Asteria turned into a quail: [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.21.1. See also Forbes Irving (1992, 211–16).

lost his sight when he spied on his wife Olympias having sex with Zeus Ammon in the form of a snake.[89]

Transformation may also occur as a punishment, either for daring to reject divine advances, or for actual congress, whether consensual or forced.[90] The maternal goddess Hera and the virginal Artemis often feature in narratives of this sort: Callisto was turned into a bear by Hera after she discovered her husband's affair with the girl, while Arktos was also punished by being transformed into a bear, this time by Artemis for having been raped by Zeus.[91]

SEX STRATAGEMS

Disguise—which is essentially a temporary, superficial kind of transformation—is also employed in sex stratagems, narratives in which human males exploit the erotic epiphany schema in an attempt to sleep with mortal women other than their wives.[92] In sex stratagems, the god does not undergo transformation into a human; rather the human disguises himself as a god. A notable example is that of Ninus' brother Picus, who enticed women into believing that he was a god, though the means by which he succeeded are uncertain.[93] Diodorus explains that Picus created certain mystic visions (*μυστικὰς φαντασίας*) as part of his seduction ritual. Presumably, he somehow succeeded in recreating the physical characteristics (light, beauty, fragrance, size) and setting (a watery place or a temple or shrine) that were commonly associated with erotic epiphanies. Picus was also identified with Zeus, a fitting divine model considering that he conceived many children through his Jovian deceptions; seemingly pseudo-epiphanies could be equally fruitful.[94]

[89] Erymanthos: Ptol. Heph. *ad* Phot. *Bibl. Cod*. 190, 146–7; Ammon Zeus and Olympias: Plut. *Alex*. 3.1–4. On blindness and 'visual infringements against divinities', see Buxton (1980, 30–5, esp. 31): 'Stories about mortals seeing immortals bathing—and there are many such stories, some culminating in blinding, some in other forms of punishment—are normally of the form: male sees female immortal. Furthermore, the goddesses about whom the narratives cluster are the virgin divinities Athene and Artemis.'

[90] For example, Asteria in her flight from Zeus was transformed into a quail ([Apollod.] *Bibl*. 1.21.1), while Daphne rejected Apollo's advances and was transformed into a laurel (Ov. *Met*. 1.452ff.). For other stories of transformation as a result of thwarted sexual advances see Fantham's introduction to Alison (2014) and parts II and III of the same book.

[91] Callisto: Paus. 8.1.4–5. In other versions of the myth transformation precedes or succeeds sexual intercourse with the god. Arktos: Hes. fr. 163 M-W = Ps. Eratosth. *Catast*. 1 Olivieri, p. 50 Robert = *Commt. in Aratum reliqu*. p. 181 Maass.

[92] No female mortals are portrayed in our sources as employing sex stratagems to enjoy intimacy with men other than their lawful wedded husbands.

[93] Diod. Sic. 6.5.1–6. On this narrative and the syncretized identity of Picus, who was also known as Zeus, see Ogden (2008, 110–11) and (2013, ch. 9). Cook (1914, 695–7) contains all the related primary sources.

[94] More on Picus, who was also known as Zeus, in Halliday (1922), Harrison (1927, 100), and Nilsson (1950, 554–5). See also Suda s.v. *Πῆκος* and *Αἴγυπτος*.

Treachery and deception (δόλος and ἀπάτη) are almost invariably to be found in erotic epiphany narratives. The terms may refer to the mischievous behaviour of deities (especially Zeus) towards their mortal lovers. The participle ἀπατήσας is used to refer to Zeus' transformation into a crocus-breathing bull during his flirtation with Europa.[95] A fragment from the Hesiodic *Ehoiai* describes Europa as having been subdued by Zeus' wiles (Διὸς δμηθεῖσα δόλοισι).[96] In Diodorus' account of Zeus' sex epiphany to Alcmene, *apatē* is again used to signify Zeus' assumption of the likeness of Amphitryon.[97] Sometimes the very act of wooing a woman is described in terms of 'besieging a fortress', a situation in which decisive resolution is often facilitated by some sort of deception. A good example is Josephus' account of the epiphany of Decius Mundus to Paulina in the guise of the god Anubis.[98]

While Decius Mundus' pursuit of Paulina, a high-born, virtuous matron, is described as a siege on her virtue (ἀρετή), sexual 'surrender' to her pseudo-divine lover is defined as ἅλωσις (capture). With the help of the freedwoman Ida, Mundus, a high-ranked Roman citizen, resorts to trickery (ἐπιβουλήν, τεχνάται), disguising himself as Anubis and paying the priests of the god's temple to secure their help. When the eldest priest informs the virtuous matron that Anubis will be waiting to spend the night with her in his temple, Paulina is delighted and goes with her husband's consent, offering Mundus her services throughout the night in the belief that she is participating in a *pannychis* in honour of the god. The next morning Paulina proudly relates the god's *epiphaneia* to her husband and friends: ἡ Παυλῖνα πρωῒ ὡς τὸν ἄνδρα ἐλθοῦσα τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν ἐκδιηγεῖται τοῦ Ἀνούβιδος καὶ πρὸς τὰς φίλας ἐνελαμπρύνετο λόγοις τοῖς ἐπ' αὐτῷ. The amorous liaison between Decius Mundus and Paulina in its present literary form has been influenced by the classic story of the Egyptian king Nectanebus II. According to Pseudo-Callisthenes, the Egyptian king deceived Olympias, wife of Philip of Macedon, and made her believe that he was Zeus Ammon, and through her became the father of Alexander the Great.[99] The historical veracity of the amorous liaison between Decius Mundus and Paulina has been contested on various grounds, not least on the basis of the fact that female devotees of Isis in Rome were renowned for abstaining from sexual relations on certain sacred days. But what is of interest here is that the episode can indeed function as a testament to

[95] Hes. fr. 140 M-W; schol. *Il.* 12.292; Mosch. 2.77ff.

[96] Fr. 141 M-W.

[97] Hes. *Scut.* 26–49 and Diod. Sic. 4.9.4. Diodorus emphasizes the fact that the god had to resort to deception as the only means of seducing so chaste a lady as Herakles' mother: πεῖσαι δ'οὐδαμῶς ἐλπίζειν διὰ τὴν σωφροσύνην. τὴν ἀπάτην οὖν προκρίναντα διὰ ταύτης παρακρούσασθαι τὴν Ἀλκμήνην, Ἀμφιτρύωνι κατὰ πᾶν ὁμοιωθέντα.

[98] *AJ* 13.65–80. This *chronique scandaleuse* is dated by Pharr (1927, 142) and others to AD 19. For a text, translation, and commentary of the text, see Grenier (1977, 75–7) and Meyer (1987, 193–6). The spicy account of Anubis' pseudo-epiphany follows immediately after a brief account of Jesus and his life (also known as the *Testamentum flavium*). This asymmetry in length has caused frustration to some biblical scholars and has led others to believe that perhaps the story was inserted as a parodic comment on the notion of the Immaculate Conception of Jesus.

[99] See [Callisthenes] *History of Alexander* 1.4 ff. with Pharr. (1927, 144ff.). For the opposite view that there were Egyptian influences in the Alexander Romance, Jasnow (1997). More recent discussions of the episode and the suspicious attitude of the Roman society towards the women's participation in the cult of Isis can be found in Alvar (2008, 183–5) and Klotz (2012).

the steadfast expectation of epiphanies as part of the cults of Isis and Anubis in the Graeco-Roman world.[100]

Kyrillos and Rufinus report that a similar stratagem was employed by Tyrannus, one of Saturn's priests, in order to entice local beauties into paying frequent visits to the god's temple. When the chosen girl arrived, he would slip into the cavity of the god's hollow bronze statue and, once inside, direct the trembling woman through the mouth of the god. Having disguised himself as Saturn, he would then extinguish all the lights in the temple simultaneously, before manifesting himself independently of the statue in order to enjoy the sexual favours of his victim.[101]

Other individuals did not have to go to such lengths, however. In order to seduce Callirrhoe, Cimon simply hid himself by the bank of the river Scamander. Having covered his head with reeds, he then 'manifested' himself while the virgin ritually bathed before her wedding day. When she uttered the ritual petition, 'Scamander, take my virginity', Cimon appeared and forced a literal conclusion to her symbolic gesture.[102] The incident is characterized as a stratagem (*στρατήγημα*) by Pseudo-Aeschines.

Analogous sex stratagems are attested cross-culturally. In Boccacio's *Decameron* (1349–52, rev. 1370–1), Friar Alberto of Imola has his way with Monna Lisetta da Ca' Quirinoby, having disguised himself as the archangel Gabriel.[103] In the Sanskrit Panchatantra, a weaver disguises himself as Vishnu to sleep with a princess.[104] Similarly, in the Arabian *Thousand and One Nights*, Malek, another weaver, visits the princess Schirin disguised as the prophet Mohammed.[105]

SYNOPSIS

If we return to the passage from the *Birds* quoted above, the idea of a city that strives to protect itself against an invasion of sexually aroused male deities is, of course, meant to raise a laugh. Even so, we should not overlook the fact that fortifying the city's women against the sexual attacks of invaders is included among other major political and military measures designed to safeguard the newly established city's existence and independence. We might have expected

[100] More on this issue in Klotz (2012), who argues that the episode may alludes to background cultic realities of Anubis or priests of Anubis who dressed the part and took pleasure in mortal women.

[101] See Poulsen (1945, 188), who quotes Kyrillos' *Contra Julianum* VII Migne, *Patrol. graec.* 76, 874B and Rufinus' *Hist. eccles.* II 28, Migne, *Patrol. lat.* 21, 538.

[102] [Aeschin.] *Epist.* 10.5–6: *Λουομένης δὲ καὶ τὸ εἰωθὸς ἔπος, ὡς μετὰ ταῦτα ἐπυθόμην, λεγούσης, 'λαβέ μου, Σκάμανδρε, τὴν παρθενίαν', ἐκθορὼν ἐκ τῶν θάμνων ὁ Σκάμανδρος Κίμων 'ἡδέως' ἔφη 'δέχομαι καὶ λαμβάνω Καλλιρρόην Σκάμανδρος ὤν, καὶ πόλλ' ἀγαθὰ ποιήσω σοι'. Ταῦτα ἅμα λέγων καὶ ἁρπάσας τὴν παῖδα ἀφανὴς γίγνεται.* 6 *Οὐ μὴν καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα ἀφανὲς γίγνεται, ἀλλὰ τέτταρσιν ὕστερον ἡμέραις πομπὴ μὲν ἦν Ἀφροδίτης, ἐπόμπευον δὲ αἱ νεωστὶ γεγαμημέναι καὶ ἡμεῖς τὴν πομπὴν ἐθεώμεθα. Ἡ δὲ νύμφη ἰδοῦσα τὸν Κίμωνα ὡς μηδὲν αὑτῷ κακὸν συνειδότα ἅμα ἐμοὶ θεώμενον, προσεκύνησε, καὶ ἀποβλέψασα εἰς τὴν τροφόν, 'ὁρᾷς' εἶπε τίτθη, τὸν Σκάμανδρον, ᾧ τὴν παρθενίαν ἔδωκα;' καὶ ἡ τίτθη ἀκούσασα ἀνέκραγε, καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα ἔκπυστον γίγνεται.*

[103] Boccaccio (1952, 310–12). [104] Ambedkar (1925, 89–111).

[105] Burton (2008, vol. 10, 112–25).

Peisetaerus to warn the chorus against the violation of the city's walls, rather than its women. However, the passage suggests two different ways by which the gods could turn against the community: a military attack against the walls of the city and the infiltration of its inner civic structure through the seduction of its female population.[106] In this way, Aristophanes draws attention to the status of Greek women as receptacles of power and the means by which regulation of their sexual behaviour guarantees social and political stability.

In a sense, then, this passage confirms Greek society's anxiety in dealing with extramarital sex and procreation.[107] This is particularly true for women whose impregnation by anyone else except their husband would have posed serious threats to the integrity of the family and jeopardized the hereditary rights of legitimate children.[108] Moreover there is always the danger that an extramarital pregnancy might offend the family gods or heroes and the spirits of dead relatives. Unmarried mothers were commonly considered as a source of disgrace to their families and were often marginalized.[109] It is only to be expected that in a social environment in which pregnancy resulting from a youthful lapse from virtue, an incestuous relationship, or even rape would not be met with tolerance, attributing the birth of an illegitimate child to the sexual meddling of the gods would be a well-attested practice. Claiming divine paternity for an extramarital pregnancy would eradicate the stigma of illegitimacy from the infant and save the mother from ignominy, thus allowing their social reintegration.[110]

As a result of the popularity of this mechanism, however, such allegations were often met with suspicion. Note, for instance, Ion's reluctance to accept Creusa's account of Apollo's sexual advances towards a mortal woman: 'That is impossible,' he cries, 'it must be an attempt to cover one of her slips with a mortal man.' Similar accusations surrounded Semele's claims to have shared Zeus' bed. One should note here that both Creusa and Semele were of noble birth. An ordinary woman's claim to divine courtship would be met with an equal amount of suspicion, unless, of course, her story was manipulated by more influential figures for political purposes. According to Plutarch, Lysander made use of a boy named Silenus, whose mother alleged that Apollo had fathered him, in order to promote political reform in Sparta.[111]

In fact, the only certainty about sexual unions between gods and humans is that they were bound to be fruitful.[112] In the *Birds* the women mentioned by Peisetaerus were seduced by gods and gave birth to heroes and demigods that featured prominently in heroic genealogies: Alcmene, the wife of Amphitryon (Fig. 5.2), was seduced by Zeus and gave birth to Herakles, the grandfather of Antiochus, the eponymous hero of the Antiochidae *phylē*; Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, bore

[106] Note the strongly derogatory use of μοιχεύσοντες, on which see Sommerstein (1987, 233 *ad* 558).

[107] On bastardy and citizenship, see Ogden (1996, 83–165), with bibliography.

[108] See for example Ar. *Thesm*. 295–371 with Mikalson (2005, 176–8); Lys. 1.30–3 and Dem. 23.53.

[109] On Greeks practising exposure or infanticide as a response to illegitimacy, deformity, and poverty see Pettersson (1985, 116): 'In the face of strong familial and societal disapproval and of a bleak economic and social future for the child, many women bearing an illegitimate child may have chosen not to rear it.' On the close correlation between ancient literary production and societal realities on the matter of exposing illegitimate offspring, see Redford (1967).

[110] E.g. Hdt. 6.68ff., discussed above.

[111] Plut. *Lys*. 15.1–3

[112] With the exception of homosexual affairs.

Dionysus, who in turn bore Oeneus, the eponymous hero of the Oeneidae *phylē*; Alope, the daughter of Cerkyon, was raped by Poseidon and gave birth to Hippothoon, the founder of the homonymous Cleisthenic tribe.[113] Of the sexual unions of goddesses and mortal men mentioned by Athenaeus, the affair between Aphrodite and Anchises resulted in the birth of Aeneas, the hero who lent his name and parentage to the Aeniadae, traditionally thought to be the first colonizers (*οἰκήτορες*) of Italy.[114] Ion, fruit of a union between Apollo and Erechtheus' daughter (and subsequently king of Athens), became the eponymous hero of all the Ionians, while his four sons became the eponymous heroes of the four pre-Cleisthenic Athenian tribes. Most importantly, through Ion the Athenians were able to claim special political and cultural bonds with the Ionian colonies in Asia Minor, so advancing their imperial ambitions in the Greek East.[115]

In many respects, the heroic or semi-divine offspring of these unions were (with some notable exceptions) their most positive aspect. This is especially true in view of the ambiguous consequences that an erotic encounter with a deity often had for the mortal lover, who almost invariably suffered some change of status, positive or negative: on the one hand, erotic epiphanies might lead to heroization, apotheosis, and the acquisition of cultic honours (as for Adonis and Ariadne); on the other hand they could lead to blindness, insanity, and even death. In many cases, witnessing or participating in divine erotica is accompanied by physical transformation, which ranges from being pregnant (as Danae and Iphimedeia) to being transformed into an animal (as Io and Callisto). Matters were no less complicated for deities who enjoyed prolonged sexual proximity with humanity: Eos is condemned to watch her mortal lover ageing for eternity, and Thetis must witness the death of her mortal son.[116] In Aphrodite's speech to Aeneas, the goddess lays out the reasons why she can neither stay with her mortal lover and father of her son, nor take him away with her to join the assembly of the immortal gods.[117]

Van der Ben, Clay, and others maintain that the sexual union between Aphrodite and Anchises was the last mixed union that produced any offspring.[118] Henceforth, immortals resisted the sexual allure of mortals, to avoid the pain that comes with senescence and death. This view is only partly true. Greeks placed the privilege of sharing their beds with the gods (and, as a result, producing heroic or semi-divine children) in their heroic past, along with the privilege of sharing their tables.[119] However, they never stopped imagining erotic encounters with the divine. From Archaic to Hellenistic times and beyond, such epiphanies provided

[113] Alcmene: Hes. *Scut*. 26–49, Diod. Sic. 4.9.2; Semele: Eur. *Bacch*. 26–31, Diod. Sic. 3.64.3–5; Alope: Dem. 60.31; Hyg. *Fab*. 187.

[114] Aeneas: *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 192–201, 239–90 and Hes. *Th*. 1008–10, with West (1966) ad loc. and van der Ben (1980, 41–55). Let us not forget that Caesar and Augustus too traced their bloodline back to Venus herself through Aeneas: see Beard, North, and Price (1998, 199–201).

[115] Mikalson (2005, 174–5).

[116] Eos: *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 5.220–36; Thetis: *Il*. 18.430–5.

[117] Lefkowitz (2002, 340): 'Marriages with goddesses are emblematic of the difficulties involved in extended relationships between mortals and immortals.'

[118] Van der Ben (1981), Clay (1989, 166–70), and Turkeltaub (2003, 75–8). See the review of relevant scholarship in Faulkner (2008, 2, 8–16), who rightly disagrees: 'The case, however, for reading Aphrodite as an aetiology of why gods no longer have affairs with mortals has been exaggerated.'

[119] See Paus. 8.2.4–5.

divine ancestry for heroes, kings, poets, and athletes, thus aligning them with the gods and accounting for their extraordinary abilities: Attalos, the famous athlete from Magnesia-on-the-Maeander claimed ancestry from the river Maeander; Karion, the well-known musician from Epidamnos, convinced himself that his wife was impregnated by Herakles, while the Rhodians took pride in their victorious athlete Diagoras being Hermes' son.[120] As mentioned above, Homer's mother was said to have experienced the erotic epiphany of a daimon while attending the Mouseia festival.[121] A similar story was told about Plato: he was not the son of Aristandros, but the fruit of the sexual union of his mother Amphictione with Apollo's *phasma*.[122] Divine ancestry was claimed for many political and military leaders, from the Messenian commander Aristomenes to Alexander the Great.[123] Claims to divine parentage continued to be made in late antiquity: Justinian's mother was said to have conceived her son after sleeping with a δαίμων.[124]

As Vermeule puts it: 'Greek fantasies of being lovers of the gods were linked to their certainty of being children of the gods. The gods loved them as partners, and cared for them as parents, the creators and progenitors who would, in some cases, take care of them when they died.'[125] Most importantly, erotic epiphanies offered a useful conceptual tool for exploring the possibility and extent of intimacy between humans and gods. In the narratives discussed above, role reversals do take place (Anchises seems in control when the goddess of love demands his love, for example) without jeopardizing the gods' authority and the pre-existing world order. But such sexual unions are only temporary, marked by a well-established sequence of pleasure and pain. In this way, erotic epiphanies provide a conceptual schema for articulating the interdependent but ultimately incompatible natures of mortals and immortals.

[120] Attalos and Karion: [Aeschin.] *Epist.* 10.8–9; Diagoras: Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 7.

[121] Ps. Plut. *Vit. Hom* 1.3. See also Hel. *Aethiop* 3.14.2, where Homer's father is either a prophet or Hermes.

[122] Orig. *c. Cels.* 6.8 and 1.37.

[123] Aristomenes: Paus. 4.14.7–8; Alexander: Arrian, *Anab.* 3.3.2.

[124] Procop. *Anecd.* 12.18–19.

[125] Vermeule (1979, 177).

6

Epiphanies in cult

> δοκέω δέ, εἴ τι περὶ τῶν θείων πρηγμάτων δοκέειν δεῖ . . .
>
> This is at least what I think, if indeed one is allowed to have views about things divine . . .
>
> Hdt. 9.65.8

With the ritualized erotic union of Dionysus and the Basilinna discussed in the previous chapter we have moved into yet another of the situational contexts of divine epiphany, that of cult. The three sections on mystic epiphanies, epiphany festivals, and epiphany in a sacrificial context aim to examine divine epiphany and mortal–immortal interaction in general as they are portrayed in narratives that focus on these three key areas of cultic activity. In the mystic epiphanies section I consider narratives that relate epiphanies in mystery cults (*ὄργια*, *μυστήρια*, *τελεταί*, *κτλ.*), while in the epiphany festivals section I look further into narratives that recount epiphanies in a festive context (*ἑορταί*, *τελεταί*, *θυσίαι*). These two subdivisions of cultic epiphanies are not quite as distinct as they may sound. They are in fact inextricably intertwined, since many of the Greek festivals have had both secret/mysteric and public/poliadic aspects and divine epiphanies in one form or the other occurred in both aspects.[1] The main difference between the two would be that the epiphanies that occurred in the public aspect of a festival would have been witnessed by the community as a whole, whereas those taking place in a mystery cult would have been perceived only by the initiates. The arrival of Dionysus, for instance, in his ship cart, which belonged to the public aspect of the Anthesteria festival, would have been seen by the whole community; whereas the arrival of the same god at the Boukoleion and his ritual union with the Basilinna, which would have been part of the mysteric aspect of the festival, would have been witnessed only by those initiated in the mysteries of the god.[2] The partial overlapping in ancient terminology is also telling: the term *teletai* can

[1] The main criteria for discussing a narrative reporting an epiphany under the mystery cult heading are i) selectivity and ii) exclusivity. By selectivity, I mean that while participation in the rest of the civic cults was imposed by the polis on the individual, in mystery cults, the individual is given the choice to participate or not. By exclusivity, I refer to the usual arrangement of these cults along the lines of private and exclusive clubs, with limited and controlled access to higher cosmological and philosophical knowledge, which was unattainable for the rest of the initiated commoners. More on the topic in Graf (2003, 253).

[2] Simon (1983, 92–101) and Seaford (2006, ch. 4).

denote both a public festival and a mystic initiation.[3] Finally, since sacrifice(s) performed in honour of the celebrated deity, and joyous processions transporting the visual symbol of the presence of the deity, were the two main ritual foci of these festivals, the third and final section of this chapter looks at epiphanies in sacrificial and processional contexts.

MYSTIC EPIPHANIES

In the study of epiphany in Greek literature and culture, mystery cults present one of the trickiest areas in the history of Greek religion. Paradoxically, if mystery cults did indeed provide an immediate encounter with the divine, as has been repeatedly suggested, there is hardly any more suitable field to look to for epiphanies.[4] The late and ambiguous nature of our literary sources, which refrain from divulging the secret rites they indicate, remains the main problem: students of Greek religion find themselves mostly grappling with mere allusions to mystic epiphanies incorporated in the writings of Greek and Roman comedy, oratory, tragedy, philosophy, and historiography, and more extensive narratives found in late pagan or Christian authors, which, however, are embedded in their authors' complex political and ideological agenda, and therefore are of potentially distorted nature.[5]

Vague and obscure references to 'mystic visions and mystic voices' (*πολλὰ μὲν ὁρῶντα μυστικὰ θεάματα, πολλῶν δὲ ἀκούοντα τοιούτων φωνῶν*),[6] 'divine terrifying apparitions' (*δείματα θεῖα*),[7] 'voices and dancing and the solemn majesty of sacred music and holy visions' (*φωνὰς καὶ χορείας καὶ σεμνότητας ἀκουσμάτων ἱερῶν καὶ φασμάτων ἁγίων ἔχοντες*),[8] 'apparitions of great number and various nature' (*φάσματα πολλὰ καὶ ποικίλα*),[9] *ἱερὰ σύμβολα*,[10] and so on, can hardly help us identify which mystery cult the author has in mind, let alone illuminate the nature of the divine apparitions that the initiates (*μύσται*) experienced in each case. And yet, terms like *φάσματα*, *ὄψεις*, and *φωναί* are all epiphanic *propriae*

[3] Clinton (2003, 53–4) provides an excellent discussion of these terms. It can be supplemented with Graf (2003), who adds that *mystēria* can also denote a rite of passage. For a history of the semantic development of *teletē* and its cognates, see Schuddeboom (2009).

[4] Burkert (1987, 90): 'In religious terms, mysteries provide an immediate encounter with the divine.' Graf (2003, 255): 'But to prepare for and be allowed direct contact with a divinity is a function of most mystery cults.' See also Bowden (2010, 213), who singles out the establishing of a closer relationship with the divine as one of the major aims of initiation rites along with gaining a new status.

[5] Bremmer (2014, ch. 1) discusses these and other similar problems.

[6] Dio Chrys. *Or*. 12.33 von Arnim. It is unclear which mysteries Dio has in mind here. The ritual seating (*thronismos*) of the initiate mentioned in the same passage is attested for the Korybantic rites by Plat. *Euthyd*. 277d, while it has also been conjectured for the Kabeiric mysteries in Samothrace by Nock (1941, 577–8). A form of *thronismos* is also attested in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* 11 and could have been a constituent ritual element in Eleusis, if we are to read the Aristophanic passage (*Nub*. 250–5) as a parody of the Eleusinian mysteries.

[7] Procl. *In Remp*. 2.108, 17–30 Kroll. For *ἐνιδρῦσθαι* meaning 'to be placed', 'to settle in a place' c. dat. *loci*, 'to frequent' see Theocr. *Id*. 17.102; *Epigr. Gr*. 17.5; *AP* 10.9, and Alciphro 1.33; for *ἐνθεάζειν* meaning 'to be inspired' (like *enthousiazein*) see Hdt. 1.63 and Luc. *Alex*. 13.

[8] Plut. Fr. 178 Sandbach = Stobaeus, iv.52.49.

[9] Dio Chrys. *Or*. 4.90; Pl. *Phdr*. 250c.

[10] Cf. Pl. *Phdr*. 250c.

voces, i.e. they can be used to denote an epiphany of a visual or auditory nature.[11] More importantly, some of the *semeia* that traditionally are thought to accompany an epiphany are also to be found in the descriptions of mystic epiphanies handed down by these authors, such as fear, light, amazement, awe, and happiness.[12] Moreover, a great number of the epiphanic narratives discussed in previous chapters are orchestrated in terms of an antithesis between light and darkness, ignorance and knowledge, fear and reassurance.[13] This kind of antithetic presentation of the same terms is prominent in passages where the experiences of the initiates are described. Hence, it is not only legitimate, but also essential for our present study to discuss epiphanies in a mystery cult context, provided that one always bears in mind the difficulties involved.

Another major difficulty arises from the large number of mystery cults and the restricted space that can be devoted to discussing each of them in the context of the present book. One way to deal with this difficulty is to begin our discussion with some general remarks on epiphanies as attested in more than one of the Greek mystery cults, and proceed to a closer examination of the oldest and most extensive narrative that contains allusions to mystic epiphanies: the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.[14]

Legomena and *drōmena:* words and actions

If epiphanies were indeed a major facet of these mystery cults, then they would be heard and/or seen and/or acted out among the participants and/or the priestly personnel. Now the ratio between ritual words, deeds, and re-enactment may vary in different ritual systems and different social contexts, but modern anthropological parallels show that: i) there is a reciprocal relationship between these elements, and ii) in private initiation rites there is extra emphasis on the words, while in more collective rites mass participation may rely more on the display of conspicuous visible material symbols than on auditory communication.[15] This is a very important point to bear in mind when we try to determine, for example, what fifth-century Athenians may have seen or heard when they participated en masse in the public aspect of the Great Mysteries, and when they confronted the hierophant or the exegete after their entrance into the Telesterion.[16]

[11] *phasma*(*ta*): Plut. *Arat*. 32, 1–3; Plut. *Them*. 15.1; *opseis* and *phonas:* Plut. *Phoc*. 28.1–2. See also the section on *phasma* epiphanies in chapter 1.

[12] Fear: Aristid. *Or*. 22.2; light: Ar. *Ran*. 154–7; amazement: [Dem.] *De eloc*. 10 Radermacher (διὸ καὶ τὰ μυστήρια ἐν ἀλληγορίαις λέγεται πρὸς ἔκπληξιν καὶ φρίκην, ὥσπερ· ἐν σκότῳ καὶ νυκτί. ἔοικεν δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀλληγορία τῷ σκότῳ καὶ τῇ νυκτί); awe: Procl. *In Remp*. II 108, 17–30 Kroll; happiness: Artemid. 2.39.

[13] Seaford (2005, 603).

[14] For an informative introduction and further bibliography on the mystery cults of the Greek and Roman world, see Graf (2000), Gordon (2002), Johnston (2007), Bowden (2010), Gordon (2012), Burkert (1987), and Bremmer (2014), who offer more specialized analyses. See also the essays collected by Cosmopoulos (2003). English translations and brief commentaries of some basic texts related to the ancient *mystēria* can be found in Meyer (1987).

[15] E.g. Tambiah (1985, 18).

[16] Various reconstructions of the initiatory rites have been proposed, on which see Deubner (1932, 71–91); Mylonas (1961, 237–85); Clinton (1993, 110–24 and 118–19); Burkert (1983, 248–97); Parker (2005, 334–68), and, more recently, Bremmer (2014, ch. 1).

Ritual viewing

The evidence from the mystery cults of Eleusis and Samothrace suggests that ritual viewing of sacred objects and images was of paramount importance in ancient mystery rites.[17] Compare here the following terms that are attested in both cults: i) μύστης (from μύω)[18] is the one who closes his eyes or his lips (i.e. the one who is ritually blindfolded or keeps ritual silence), as opposed to ii) ἐπόπτης, the one who sees; iii) the ἱερά, i.e. the sacred objects, that were shown to the initiates by iv) the ἱεροφάντης, i.e. the one who reveals (from the verb φαίνω, same root with ἐπιφάνεια, ἐπιφανής, etc.).[19] The very word μυστήρια means the festival of the μύσται, that is of those who have their eyes closed or walk around blindfolded led by the μυσταγωγοί.[20] Blindness, however, in Greek sources is often equated with lack of knowledge, lack of understanding, and even madness.[21] Sight, by contrast, is associated with knowledge and understanding. In fact, regardless of the obvious differences in terminology, one may not be far from the truth if one claims that the passage from ritual blindness to ritual sight, the transformation from being a μύστης, who is sightless and blind, to true knowledge, to being an ἐπόπτης, who is an insightful and sensitive viewer, was the basic conceptual framework for a number of other cults of the Graeco-Roman world, such as the mysteries of Dionysus in Athens and elsewhere, the Andanian mysteries of Messenia, the mysteries of Hagna in Lykosoura, and of Demeter Eleusinia in Pheneos in Arcadia, etc.[22]

Only the gods and a limited number of those who are dear to the gods, often called *theophileis*, can see clearly. Gods control sight and it is up to them to bestow it (e.g. Athena raises the *achlys* from the eyes of Diomedes in *Iliad* 5) or to withhold it (e.g. Athena deprives young Teiresias of his sight in the Callimachean *Bath of Pallas*); and they often do so by manifesting themselves. This remark brings us back to epiphanies as vehicles of knowledge, or what can be termed the epistemological aspect of epiphanies. It is possible, then, that epiphanies, in one form or another, took place in the initiatory process of the mysteries in Eleusis and

[17] I have developed this idea more extensively in Petridou (2013).

[18] Beekes, *Etymological dictionary of Greek*, s.v. μύω (from IE? *meus-, *meuH- 'shut'). L. Cornutus (*De natura deorum* 56–7) gives a different etymological source for the word μυστήρια, which he derives from the verb μυσιᾶν, 'to be satiated/satisfied': μυστήρια δ' ἄγειν ἤρξαντο αὐτῇ φιλοσοφοῦντες, ἅμα τῇ εὑρέσει τῶν πρὸς τὸν βίον χρησίμων καὶ τῇ πανηγύρει χαίροντες ὡς μαρτυρίῳ χρώμενοι τοῦ πεπαῦσθαι μαχομένους αὐτοὺς ἀλλήλοις περὶ τῶν ἀναγκαίων μυσιᾶν τε, ὅ ἐστι κεκορῆσθαι· πιθανὸν γὰρ ἐντεῦθεν ὠνομάσθαι τὰ μυστήρια, ὅθεν καὶ μυσία παρά τισιν ἡ Δημήτηρ, ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ μώσεως δεῖσθαι τὰ δυσξύμβλητόν τι ἔχοντα. For further discussion on the etymology of *mystēria* and initiation, see Graf (2000, 615) and Bremmer (2014, preface).

[19] On the terminology used to describe the stages of initiation see Riedweg (1987, 5–14); Dowden (1980, 407–9); Simms (1990); Parker (2005, 345–6).

[20] *Mystagôgoi* assisting initiates: Menander, fr. 500 KA; *LSCGS* 15; Plutarch, *Mor.* 765a. Cf. also Clinton (1992, 86).

[21] Compare the triptych darkness–blindness–ignorance as an underlying motif in Sophocles' *Ajax*; or what the physically blind Teiresias in *OT* 170–5 says to his king who retains his physical sight, but fails to comprehend the fatal web of errors that has been built all around him: 'you are blind in ears, in mind, in eyes'. The analogy between physical and ritual vision and blindness is a topic I discuss further in Petridou (2013).

[22] See Graf (2000) and the essays collected and edited by Cosmopoulos (2003).

Samothrace and endowed the initiands with sight/knowledge concerning major cosmological, ontological, theological, and ultimately soteriological issues.

In the beautiful epigram ascribed to Antiphilus discussed in chapter 2, the reader is told that the narrator's initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis offered him not only mystic enlightenment, but also helped him to regain his vision.[23] On the night of his initiation into the mysteries of the two goddesses, the narrator left behind the darkness of his ignorance and blindness, and welcomed the light of knowledge and the light of the sun. Vision and initiation were also closely connected on the marble votive plaque found in the area of the Eleusinian Telesterion (Fig. 1.1).[24] In the same section of chapter 2, I proposed that although it is possible that this votive pair of eyes commemorated Eukrates' recovery from his blindness in the course of his initiation, or even independently, an equally plausible reading of the artefact would be to take it as an ex-voto commemorating Eukrates' initiation or/and, more importantly, his vision of Demeter gleaming with divine light. The vision of the deity may very well have been his very first vision after his blindness was cured. Demeter was perceived in a similar way, as imbued with light, by Metaneira in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, which will be discussed below.

Encountering the gods and goddesses of the underworld

Our sources suggest that mystic rites often involved life-changing experiences that left an everlasting impression on the souls of the initiates.[25] Students of Greek religion have rightly suggested that only life-threatening situations can shake the foundations of the human psyche and, thus, help in the acquisition of a new enlightened self. Life-threatening situations or death-like experiences may, then, have been part of the initiatory process in a number of secret cults with eschatological dimensions.[26] This view is supported by a number of passages that imply that a death-like experience of some kind took place during the initiatory process,

[23] *A.P.* 9.298.

[24] Clinton (1992, 90) fig. 78; for the inscription see *IG* II² 4639. Clinton maintains that images of the two goddesses lit from behind were used in the initiation. The rays, according to this view, must allude to the light streaming from the image of the goddess in the course of the initiation.

[25] Compare here what Aristotle says of the mysteries of Eleusis (fr. 15 Rose): 'Initiands are not meant to learn (*mathein*) but to be significantly affected (*pathein*) by the experience and be put into a certain state of mind'; or what the rhetorician Sopatros (*Rhet. Gr.* 8, 114 Watz) wrote after his initiation to Eleusis: 'I came out of the mystery hall feeling like a stranger to myself (ἐπ' ἐμαυτῷ ξενιζόμενος).' For an excellent discussion of this specific passage and the emotional responses of the *mystai* in general, see Borgeaud (2007).

[26] For instance, see Clinton (2003, 55): 'A mystery cult (1) presupposes *mystai* as described above, (2) normally requires that they undergo a death-like experience or at least an experience of suffering, and (3) holds forth a promise of prosperity in this life and usually also in the afterlife.' Seaford (1998, 133): 'Mystic ritual may be imagined as taking place in Hades. An example of the combination of life and death in mystic ritual is in the formula on the gold leaf "now you died and now you were born, thrice blessed, on this day". A fifth-century BCE bone tablet from Olbia contains the words "Dionysos" and "Orphic" as well as the phrase "life death life".' Seaford rightly emphasizes the blending and the transgressing of boundaries by 'the liminal inversions of identity' in the mystic initiation process.

and that some sort of suffering (more psychological than physical?)[27] awaited the *mystai*, as part of their *ante-mortem* preparation.[28] Graf is careful to emphasize that not all ancient mystery cults had an explicit eschatological component, but such claim can be safely made in the case of the Eleusinian Mysteries, at least as far as we can judge from lines 480–2 from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*:[29]

> ὄλβιος ὃς τάδ' ὄπωπεν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων·
> ὃς δ' ἀτελὴς ἱερῶν, ὅς τ' ἄμμορος, οὔ ποθ' ὁμοίων
> αἶσαν ἔχει φθίμενός περ ὑπὸ ζόφῳ εὐρώεντι.
>
> Blessed is he of the mortal men who has beheld them,
> Whereas he who is uninitiated in the rites, or he who had no share in them,
> never enjoys a similar lot down in the mouldy nether darkness when he is dead.[30]

More significantly, the initiatory experience in a number of mystery cults seemed to have centred on an assimilation of a dying or near-death experience followed by the initiate's 'renewal' and 'rebirth'.[31] In a much-quoted passage from Stobaeus' *Anthologion*, attributed to Plutarch, dying (*τὸ τελευτᾶν*) is comparable to being initiated (*τὸ τελεῖσθαι*) in the great mysteries, while in a number of textual and inscriptional sources the initiate is described as being reborn.[32] Allusions to death of the prior-to-the-initiation-self and the birth of a new permanently illuminated self can found in the so-called Dionysiac–Orphic golden leaves discovered in Thurioi, Thessaly, and elsewhere.[33] Analogous references to rebirth and renewal can also be found in late inscriptions which pertain to the mysteries of the Anatolian Great Mother of the gods, also known as Cybele or Kubaba, which suggests that whomsoever was submitted to the ritual bloodbath, the so-called *taurobolium*, was thought of as reborn for eternity (*in aeternum renatus*).[34] This

[27] Though, once again, one cannot be absolutely sure: cf. here the frescoes from the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii, where one can see allusions to flagellation; but then the female figure who holds the rod has wings, as Burkert remarked (1987, 104): 'she is not from this world but rather an allegorical personality'. Cf. Brion (1979, 136, fig. 74).

[28] More on this topic in Graf, s.v. 'Mysterien 4. Persönlicher Gewinn und Jenseitshoffnung'.

[29] Graf (2000, s.v. 'Persönlicher Gewinn und Jenseitshoffnung').

[30] Trans. West with slight adaptations.

[31] Graf (2000, s.v. 'Mysterien 2. Aufnahmeriten').

[32] Stobaeus IV.52.49 = Plut. Fr. 178 Sandbach: *τότε δὲ πάσχει πάθος οἷον οἱ τελεταῖς μεγάλαις κατοργιαζόμενοι. διὸ καὶ τὸ ῥῆμα τῷ ῥήματι καὶ τὸ ἔργον τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ τελευτᾶν καὶ τελεῖσθαι προσέοικε.* On mystic initiation as a rehearsal of death, and thus possibly involving experience of the underworld, see Seaford (2005, 602) and Burkert (1987, ch. 4). Burkert (1985, 277): 'Deadly terror provoked and dispelled in ritual can be experienced and interpreted as anticipation and overcoming of death.' Cf. also Plut. *Virt.* 81e; Procl. *In Remp.* II 108.21–4 (ed. Kroll), and Richardson (1974, 306–7) with more references. On mystic initiation as descent to the underworld in Greek religions in general, see Ustinova (2009, 11–56) and Riedweg (2011, 219–56).

[33] More on this in Zuntz (1971); Petridou (2004); Seaford (2005); Graf and Johnston (2013). On death and rebirth as initiatory motif see Eliade (1965, 163–85); van Gennep (1960, 65–115); and West (1983, 143–6) with bibliography. Cf. esp. Seaford (2005, 605): 'Mystic initiation was a rehearsal of death. Moreover, it has numerous points of similarity with the modern near-death experiences (NDEs) that have been so exhaustively recorded and investigated over the last two decades. The NDE displays a fair degree of similarity across different culture, and I suggest that the mystic ritual of the Greeks was in part a dramatization of their experience of NDEs.' Bremmer (2002, 90–6) compares NDEs to some of the Greek texts, such as the myth of Er in Plato's *Republic*.

[34] *CIL* VI, 510 = Duthroy 18 no. 23. The inscription is dated to AD 376. In two other inscriptions from the second century AD (*CIL* XI, 5260 and *CIL* XIII, 11352) a (*dies*) *natalis* or *natalicium* is

succession of ritual death and rebirth can perhaps best be illustrated by Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (11.21), where the actual act of initiation into the mysteries of Isis is likened to an act of voluntary death, and the initiates as somehow having being reborn by the providence of the goddess who restores their health:[35]

> nam et inferum
> claustra et salutis tutelam in deae manu posita,
> ipsamque traditionem ad instar uoluntariae mortis
> et precariae salutis celebrari, quippe cum transactis
> uitae temporibus iam in ipso finitae lucis limine con-
> stitutos, quis tamen tuto possint magna religionis
> committi silentia, numen deae soleat elicere et sua
> prouidentia quodam modo renatos ad nouae reponere
> rursus salutis curricula;
>
> Both the gates of hell and the guarantee of salvation lay in the control of the goddess. The act of initiation itself was performed as a rite of voluntary death and of salvation attained by prayer; indeed, it was the will of the goddess to select persons when their span of life was complete and they were poised on the very threshold of their final days. Such people could be safely entrusted with the profound mysteries of the sect. By her providence they were in some sense reborn, for she set them back on the course of renewed health.[36]

It is of significance that Apuleius chooses to conclude his description of the expected benefits of the mysteries of Isis by emphasizing the medicinal aspect of the cult: the initiates are reborn because the goddess restores their health.[37] Perhaps there was an analogous aspect also of salvific nature in the Great Mysteria of Eleusis, one attested in both the Antiphilus epigram and the Eukrates relief. There may even be some material and literary evidence (albeit not unequivocal) to support Demeter's presiding over vision and vision-related illnesses.[38]

As seen above, however, there was an eschatological dimension in the cult of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis, at least in Classical times, and, more significantly, a certain preoccupation with proper ritual behaviour.[39] The underlying idea may

mentioned in connection to the *taurobolium* of the *criobolium*; there is no consensus among the scholarly community as to what exactly were these 'birthdays'. More on this and other epigraphic attestations of the notion of rebirth in the rites of *taurobolium* and *criobolium* in Sfameni Gasparro (1985, 111–13) and Cameron (2011, 149–53). Some scholars have read thought of this idea of eternal rebirth as betraying distinct Christian influences. I thank Jan Bremmer for bringing this to my attention.

[35] Witt (1997, 158) rightly claims that: 'from the pages of Apuleius we can gain much invaluable knowledge of the main features of Isiac initiation as it was practiced in the Imperial age'. But I also think that Book 11 of the *Metamorphoses* is an important source of information about initiation ritual in the Imperial era as a whole.

[36] Trans. P. G. Walsh.

[37] Griffiths (1978, 153) maintains that towards the end of the book which deals with Lucius' initiation there is 'the bestowal of *salus* [well-being], a deliverance both physical and spiritual, on the asinine Lucius through the grace and loving mercy of Isis'.

[38] On Demeter's iatric activity in general and her connection with ophthalmological disease in particular, see Rubensohn (1895); and Forsén (1996, 142–4).

[39] Sourvinou-Inwood (1983, 45–8), followed by Cole (2003, 193ff.), rightly notes that in the world of the polis—unlike that of epic—death ceases to be a public affair; it becomes more of a private matter and the anxiety that surrounds it seems to have been intensified. Some scepticism regarding the

have been that proper ritual behaviour in the course of initiation determined post-mortem experience and existence. Passages like lines 480–2 from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Pindar's fragment 121 (Bowra), Sophocles' fragment 837 (Pearson-Radt), as well as lines 54–7 from Aristophanes' *Frogs* support the idea that the initiation into the Great Mysteries may have prepared those initiated for their inevitable entrance into the House of Persephone (*Persephoneia dōmata* or *Dōmata Haidou*) by means of ritual rehearsal. Other passages imply that what the *mystai* saw during their initiation was really what they expected to see after their death, and that these may have included visions of underworld deities, especially visions of Persephone or Kore. The reader may be reminded of the extract from Euripides' *Hercules* (610–13), where the hero's initiation into the mysteries of Eleusis is portrayed as part of his psychological and physical preparation for his visit to Hades to steal Cerberus:

{*Αμ.*} *ἦλθες γὰρ ὄντως δώματ' εἰς Ἄιδου, τέκνον;*
{*Ηρ.*} *καὶ θῆρά γ' ἐς φῶς τὸν τρίκρανον ἤγαγον.*
{*Αμ.*} *μάχῃ κρατήσας ἢ θεᾶς δωρήμασιν;*
{*Ηρ.*} *μάχῃ· τὰ μυστῶν δ' ὄργι' εὐτύχησ' ἰδών.*

Am. Did you really go down to the chambers of Hades, my son?
Her. Yes, indeed, and I brought back to the light the three-headed beast.
Am. Did you defeat him in a fight, or was your victory the gift of the goddess?
Her. In a fight. And I had the good fortune to witness the sacred rites of the *mystai*.

In a rhetorical exercise of the Hadrianic period, Herakles argues with the *dadouchos* and tells him to lock Eleusis up and spare him from being initiated with the sacred light, because he has already been to the underworld and seen far truer mysteries.[40] Moreover, iconographical evidence further supports this suggestion (that an epiphany of the deities of the underworld might have taken place at some point during the initiation process): a fragment from the north-west wall of the Eleusinian Telesterion, for instance, depicts votaries approaching Demeter in the guise of an old woman seated on the mirthless stone; while a relief found north of the Olympieion at Athens (presently situated in the storage room of the third ephorate of Classical and Preclassical Antiquities in Athens) shows a hierophant from the deme of Hagnous in the company of the Great Goddesses (Fig. 6.1).[41]

This last mentioned artefact, in my opinion, exemplifies not only the reciprocal gaze between the mortal and the immortal (which must have been of paramount significance in the course of some initiatory rites), but also the remarkable proximity between the two that must have been the most priceless benefit of the mysteric rites for the neophyte.[42] The relief was found by J. Travlos in a series of excavations north of the Olympieion at Athens, and published for the first time by

correspondence of ritual behaviour during initiation and afterlife expectations (for not wholly unjustifiable reasons) is expressed in Bowden (2010, 22–3) and Bremmer (2014, ch. 1).

[40] *Pap. d. R. Univer. Milano* (1937), no. 20 pp. 176–7: *ἀπόκλεισον τὴν Ἐλευσεῖνα καὶ τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἱερὸν, δαδοῦχε, . . . μυστήρια πολλῷ ἀληθέστερα μεμύημαι . . . τὴν Κόρην εἶδον.*

[41] *LIMC* IV Demeter 285 = Vanderpool (*AJA* 64, pl. 73, fig. 17). Cf. also Balty (1982, 269f., fig. 27,4); Daux (*BCH* 84, 637, fig. 13); Clinton (1992, 75f. 139 Nr. 1 Abb. 55); and, more recently, Klöckner (2012, 61, Abb. 3), who contrasts the relief with the Eleusinian relief of the Lacrateides and other reliefs, in which priestly officials depict themselves in proximity to the divine.

[42] I have developed this idea further in the same article, Petridou (2013).

Fig. 6.1. Attic votive relief with a *ἱεροφάντης* from Hagnous, roughly dated to the second century AD; dimensions: W 67.5, H 63 cm (courtesy of the Third Ephorate of Classical and Preclassical Antiquities in Athens, Inv. Nr. *Λ* 13114).

Vanderpool in 1960. It was found face down in the area of one of the fourth-century houses, but it is dated by Harrison on the basis of its stylistic details as early Antonine.[43] Despite its late date, this artefact is extremely useful for our purposes, because it copies fifth-century BC models and contains the only positively identified portrait of an Attic *ἱεροφάντης* we have so far.[44] It may also be of some interest that the relief was made to order, was delivered to the house of the hierophant, but, for unknown reasons, never quite made it to a sanctuary of the two goddesses. It never met the eyes of either the two deities or the eyes of the other *theōroi*.

[43] Harrison (1965, 95). The exact location of its discovery is indicated on Travlos' plan of the area in Vanderpool (1964, 265).

[44] Fifth-century models: Vanderpool (1964, 268); Attic hierophant: Clinton (1974, 32). Raeder (2000, 154–9) provides a comprehensive discussion of a statue that allegedly depicts another hierophant of the Antonine period. I am grateful to Georg Gerleigner for this piece of information.

The inscription at the bottom of the relief reads: *Θεσμοφόροισι Θεαῖς· Ἀγνούσιος Ἱεροφάντης*, 'To the Thesmophorois Goddesses [this is dedicated] by the hierophant from the deme of Hagnous.'[45] The hierophant of our relief is a man of mature age clothed in his elaborate ceremonial outfit (*στολή*, *σκευή*, or *ἐσθής*) and hairstyle, who appears to be directly confronting, and perhaps even conversing with, the two deities.[46] Nevertheless, it is not clear whether the encounter is meant to take place in this life or in the afterlife, or perhaps in both, especially if we assume that the whole initiation ceremony was meant to prepare the participants for what they would have to face in the other world. Out of the divine duo, the deity closest to the mortal is Kore, who usually looks like a youthful version of her mother Demeter. Demeter, on the other hand, is depicted enthroned on the far left of the relief. The modern viewer of the scene is constantly under the impression that if the seated goddess were to stand up, she would no longer be comfortably accommodated by the boundaries of the schematic *naiskos*. Her head would touch the roof quite likely in the manner Demeter's head reached the rafter when she first stepped onto Metaneira's threshold (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, 188–9). Surprisingly enough, the human figure of the hierophant is only slightly smaller than the two divine ones. The iconographic norm in this sort of representation of mortals encountering the divine is that the human figures are usually of a much smaller scale.

Compare, for instance, the much smaller votaries depicted on the Triptolemos relief (Fig. 6.2).[47] In this votive relief from Eleusis (dated to circa the second half of the fourth century BC) Demeter is also portrayed in her usual maternal attire, as an older, albeit heavier version, both physically and in terms of clothing, of the more youthful Persephone who stands at the far left holding two large torches. The two goddesses are simultaneously separated and linked by Triptolemos, who is enthroned on his winged snake-driven chariot and possibly holds ears of corn in his hands. This image does not necessarily mean that the three deities central to the *ἱερός λόγος* of Eleusis were viewed by the initiates in that order or in that same attire, but it does gives us a reasonable idea of how they were visually conceptualized by their votaries and perhaps even how they were imagined as presiding over their initiation ceremony.

The goddess Demeter stands close to a group of worshippers of a much smaller scale depicted on the far right of the relief. Due to the fragmentary state of the goddess's head, it is hard to determine with any certainty whether she engages with the worshippers' gaze. Judging from the remains of her neck, however, I would be inclined to agree with van Straten, who thinks that Demeter does not address the presence of the votaries and is meant to look aloof.[48] This notion of aloofness is further intensified by the uneven distribution of space in the schematic *naiskos*: the three larger-than-life divine figures occupy two-thirds of

[45] Clinton (1974, 32): 'The name is the hieronymous form of the name of a hierophant from Hagnous, with the demotic placed *metri causa* in front of the name of the hierophant instead of after it.'

[46] More on literary and iconographical evidence on the costume of the hierophant and the *dadouchos* in Clinton (1974, 197) and Bremmer (2014, ch. 1).

[47] Cf. Süsserott (1938, 123f., pl. 25.1); Mylonas (1961, 195, fig. 74); Peschlow-Bindokat (1972, 152); and Schwarz (1987, 201, fig. 32).

[48] Van Straten (1993, 252).

Fig. 6.2. The Triptolemos relief. Votive relief from Eleusis depicting Persephone, Triptolemos, and Demeter in the presence of worshippers (Museum of Eleusis, Inv. No. 5061).

the surface of the relief, leaving the mortal figures to make a token appearance in the remaining space. They seem to be mostly interested in each other (Kore is looking at Triptolemos and Demeter's gaze is most likely meeting that of Triptolemos), wrapped up in a world of their own, quite distinct from the human votaries.

Mylonas may have been right in arguing that monuments like that depicting initiands in the presence of the goddess(es) are quite common from the fourth century onwards, and that we should 'read' them with caution, not so much as depicting an initiation but more as a *mémoire* of the initiands' pilgrimage to Eleusis or even as 'a devotional act of worship'. But the differences between the Triptolemos relief and that of the hierophant from Hagnous are remarkable. The size of the hierophant, who is portrayed as almost as large as the two deities, so much unlike the minuscule votaries of the second relief, is only the most obvious. The most arresting one is undoubtedly the superbly illustrated reciprocity between the gaze of the mortal and the immortal. If one were to draw a straight line starting from the eyes of the enthroned Demeter, then the line would surely have met with the eyes of the standing hierophant. It seems as if both sides have made a conscious effort for this meeting to happen: the goddess has sat down to reduce her size and to line up her optical path with that of the hierophant. The human devotee, on the other hand, seems equally devoted to this supremely privileged moment of viewing the divine. This reciprocal process of viewing is so unlike the atmosphere in the Triptolemos relief, where the divine figures appear to be disconnected from their human votaries, wrapped up in their own world. When one is looking at the relief from the Athenian Olympieion, one is constantly under the impression that one has been granted the same kind of privilege of looking at the two goddesses. Essentially, the external viewer of the relief has acquired along

with the internal viewer an insider's visuality. She or he is able to see Demeter and Kore as seen by both the members of the priestly personnel and the initiates. On the other hand, the viewer of the Triptolemos relief is offered more of an outsider's view of the divine. In my mind, the hierophant relief provides the clearest illustration of what ritual-sensitive visuality can offer to both the devotee and the deity honoured.[49]

Of course, we must remember that the hierophant of our relief is not a simple initiate; he is a sacred official who must have served the two deities for many years and perhaps anticipates a special treatment after he has left the world of the living behind. The fact that the priest from the deme of Hagnous is portrayed as being almost as big as Demeter and Kore may simply be an iconographical expression of his elevated ritual status. I wonder whether the same could be said about the fact that he appears to be directly confronting the divine. The hierophant from Hagnous has been granted the privilege of divinely ordered vision; he has been allowed to view, and is viewed by, the two goddesses. Then again, it is likewise possible that the female figures represented here are not the goddesses, but members of the priestly personnel who are made to look like the deities they serve, hence the unusual spectatorial intimacy between the hierophant and the two female figures, who could portray two female members of the priestly personnel, such as the two hierophantides (one was the hierophantid of Demeter and the other of Kore), who were known as *ἱερόφαντις τῆς πρεσβυτέρας* and *ἱερόφαντις τῆς νεωτέρας*.[50] However, as I have argued in the section devoted to enacted epiphanies, the ritual practice of visually assimilating a member of the priestly personnel to the deity they served is a well-established cultic practice in the Greek-speaking world and, thus, the demarcation line between the actual deities and their priestesses acting as such would have been much harder to draw in the eyes of the participants in the secret aspect of the sacred rites of the two goddesses. It is the power of ritual viewing and ritual framing that allows the initiates to *see* beyond their (certainly beyond our) culturally imposed identifications and restrictions.

The same close link between divine epiphanies embedded in pre-mortem ritual and face-to-face encounters with the deities of the underworld in post-mortem experiences, at least as they can be construed from these objects, can be found in the so-called Dionysiac–Orphic leaves discovered all over the Greek-speaking world.[51] Notwithstanding their differences, in a large number of these texts an encounter with Persephone, the queen of the underworld, and the other deities of the underworld seems to be presupposed, since these objects often contain instructions about the appropriate conduct and ritual responses when confronted

[49] See Elsner (2007, 24). Kindt (2012, 36–54) re-evaluates the notion of ritual visuality and offers caveats regarding its application to *theoria* contexts.

[50] Clinton 1974, 86. The exact title of the hierophantid of Demeter does not appear in the literary sources, but by the law of analogy it should read as above.

[51] The last twenty years or so have seen some truly ground-breaking studies on these objects. See, for instance, Graf (1993); Cole (2003); Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal (2008); the excellent edited volume by Edmonds (2011); and the updated edition of Graf and Johnston (2013). Cf. also Bowden (2010, ch. 7), who denies these texts a connection with the 'Orphic' mysteries. For an informative discussion of the Orphic–Bacchic mysteries, see Bremmer (2014, ch. 3).

with these deities.[52] Paradigmatic of this premise are the so-called Pelinna leaves, found in a grave at ancient Pelinna in Thessaly (modern Petroporos) and published for the first time by Tsantsanoglou and Parassoglou in 1987:[53]

1. Now you died and now you were born, you thrice blessed one, on this day.
2. *Tell Persephone* that Bacchios himself has set you free.
3. Bull, you leapt up into the milk.
4. Quickly, you leapt up into the milk.
5. Ram you fell into the milk.
6. You have wine as your blessed honour.
7. And *below the earth, there are waiting for you the same rites* as for the other blessed ones.

What we read in lines 2 and 7 of this ivy-shaped golden *lamella* is a promise: the deceased, obviously already initiated into the Orphic–Bacchic mysteries while still alive, is being reassured that some kind of rites (*telea*) await him in the netherworld. The reference is clearly to some kind of ritual, but what kind of ritual? Graf suggests a post-mortem initiatory ritual, and rightly argues that one of the ways 'initiation conquers death and assures eternal life is by ritually performing death and resurrection'.[54] It is a fair guess to assume that a preparatory, initiatory ritual would have prepared the initiands for this meeting with the deities of the underworld by creating an assimilation of the critical situation of dying and, perhaps, even by recreating an encounter with the deities of the underworld.

Theatricality

The element of theatricality was a major constituent part of the initiatory process in a great number of ancient mystery cults and remains so even in modern exclusive cultic systems.[55] By theatricality, I do not simply refer to some sort of dramatization, which it is easy to imagine would fit ancient descriptions of *drōmena* as part of certain mystery cults.[56] To take the secret aspect of the Great Mysteries at Eleusis as a first example, a theatrical element must have been visible in the hierophant and the torchbearer's elaborate costumes: Athenaeus, for instance, comments on the similarities of the theatrical costumes, as

[52] E.g. A1, A2–3, and A3 Zuntz (all from Thurii), Edmond (2011). Cf. also the leaves from Amphipolis (D4 Amphipolis, 4th–3rd cent. BC): *εὐαγὴς ἱερὰ Διονύσου Βακχίου εἰμὶ Ἀρχέβου[λὴ] ἡ Ἀντιδώρου*; and Pherai (D5 Pherai, 4th–3rd cent. BC): *πέμπε με πρὸς μυστῶν θιάσους· ἔχω ὄργια [ἰδοῦσα]/Δήμητρος Χθονίας, τε ‹τέλη καὶ Μητρὸς Ὀρεί[ας]*.

[53] Tsantsanoglou, K. and Parassoglou, G. (1987), 'Two Gold Lamellae from Thessaly', *Hellenica* 38: 3–17.

[54] Graf (1993, 248).

[55] Eliade (1965, 7) defines initiation in general as 'status dramatization', i.e. ritual change of status; cf. also Young (1965, 5). The importance of theatrical representation and rearrangement of self-identities in initiation rituals is well established. On theatricality and heightened emotional states in mystery cults, see Chaniotis (2013, esp. 177–80).

[56] Clinton (1993, 115).

developed by Aeschylus and the garments of the sacred officials in Eleusis;[57] and Plutarch records an anecdote about the Persian soldier who, impressed by his comely garments and impressive haircut, mistook Dadouchos Kallias for the king in the battle of Marathon.[58] It is not a coincidence either that it was through the medium of a theatrical production that Aeschylus was accused of having unwillingly divulged the mysteries of Eleusis.[59] After all, the majority of our sources for the violation of the mysteries in 415 refer to a mock performance: *τὰ μυστήρια ποιοῦντα*;[60] *τὰ μυστήρια . . . ὡς ποιεῖται ἐφ' ὕβρει*;[61] or a grotesque theatric imitation of the mysteries: *ἀπομιμούμενον τὰ μυστήρια καὶ δεικνύοντα*;[62] *οὗτος γὰρ ἐνδὺς στολήν, μιμούμενος τὰ ἱερὰ ἐπεδείκντυ τοῖς ἀμυήτοις*.[63]

An even more explicit element of theatricality was to be found in the masked priest of Demeter Kidaria at the Arcadian Pheneos, who, having thus assimilated himself to the goddess, strikes with rods the inhabitants of the netherworld.[64] Theatre-like areas, with various sitting capacities, have been discovered in the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Corinth, in Eleusis, possibly at Lycosoura, and elsewhere.[65]

The element of theatricality is present even in Lucian's description of the mystery cult of Neos Asklepios-Glykon, as introduced by Alexander the pseudomonger.[66] The whole mysteric cult, it seems, had been constructed so as to mirror the mysteries of Eleusis.[67] The main initiation ritual lasted for three successive days: the first day included the acting out of the theogonic myths peripheral to the birth of Glykon (the birth of Apollo, the birth of his son Asclepius, and the marriage of Asclepius and Koronis), while on the second day the initiates were presented with the birth and the manifestation of the god (*ἐν δὲ τῇ δευτέρᾳ*

[57] Athen. *Deipn*. 1.21e Olson: *καὶ Αἰσχύλος δὲ οὐ μόνον ἐξεῦρε τὴν τῆς στολῆς εὐπρέπειαν καὶ σεμνότητα, ἣν ζηλώσαντες οἱ ἱεροφάνται καὶ δᾳδοῦχοι ἀμφιέννυνται, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλὰ σχήματα ὀρχηστικὰ αὐτὸς ἐξευρίσκων ἀνεδίδου τοῖς χορευταῖς*.

[58] Plut. *Arist*. 5. cf. also Ael. fr. 10 and the passage quoted in n. 57 above.

[59] Schol. *ad* Arist. *NE* 3.1.17 gives the following possible titles: *Τοξοτίδες* (frr. 241–6 Radt); *Ἱέρειαι* (frr. 86–8 Radt); *Ἰφιγένεια* (fr. 94 Radt); and *Σίσυφος δραπέτης* and *πετροκυλιστής* (frr. 225–34 Radt).

[60] Andoc. 1.11. with Macdowell's (1989, 8) comments: 'from the vague statements that the profaners "did" the Mysteries or that Mysteries "happened", and that particular individuals acted as *hierophant* and *dadouchos*, we may safely conclude that the profanation comprised the acting of secret ceremonies, not just the revealing of verbal secrets'.

[61] Thuc. 6.28.1. [62] Plut. *Alc*. 22.4; Burkert (1983, 287, n. 63). [63] Lys. *Or*. 6.51.

[64] Paus. 8.15.2 (see chapter 1, 'Enacted epiphany') with Jost (2003, 156–7). This case of a male priest impersonating a female goddess with the help of a mask—an accessory largely associated with dramatic performances—has also been discussed in chapter 1, 'Enacted epiphany'.

[65] In Corinth there were two rock-cut theatral areas with room for 85–90 spectators. On Corinth and Eleusis, see Nixon (1995) and Nielsen (2000) and (2002); on theatral areas in Lycosoura, see Loucas-Durie (1992, 68). Melfi (2010) makes a persuasive case for analogous cultic performances and spaces in some of the most well-known Asklepieia of the Greek and the Roman world.

[66] Luc. *Alex*. 38–9. On the cult and the popularity of Neos Asklepios-Glykon see Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 12–66), where there is also an informative discussion of Lucian's treatment of the cultic realities behind the parody and more bibliography.

[67] Compare here the elements a) of *πρόρρησις*, i.e. the public proclamation that excluded certain people from participating in the mysteries (Luc. *Alex*. 38), b) the torchlight processions led by the priestly personnel, and c) the prominent role of the 'garlic-reeking Paphlagonian clodhoppers', who as we are explicitly told in our text function like the Eumolpidae and the Kerykes in the cult of Eleusis (Luc. *Alex*. 39).

Γλύκωνος ἐπιφάνεια καὶ γέννησις τοῦ θεοῦ); and finally, on the third day, there was a staging of the *hieros gamos* of Endymion and Selene with Alexander and his mistress Rutilia in the leading roles. Throughout the whole ceremony Alexander had avariciously retained for himself the roles of both the hierophant and *dadouchos* (*ἐδᾳδούχει δὲ καὶ ἱεροφάντει ὁ Ενδυμίων Ἀλέξανδρος*).

Dio Chrysostom makes this connection between theatrical and cultic scene even more explicit, contrasting the openness and the profane character of the theatrical productions with the private character and the secrecy of the mysteries:

> But the poets who came afterwards (after Homer and Hesiod) bringing to stage and theatre their own wisdom (as opposed to the divinely inspired Homer and Hesiod), uninitiated addressing uninitiated, have often disclosed imperfect paradigms of holy rites; but being applauded by the crowd, they tried in their own right to initiate the mob, actually, as we might say, by building open stages for Bacchic rites at tragic crossroads.[68]

In short, mimetic representation (*μίμησις*) was dominant on both the cultic and the theatrical scene. To put it in Bérard's words: 'Enfin, entre la représentation religieuse et la représentation théâtrale, les cloisons ne sont guère étanches.'[69] As a result, it is possible that some of the epiphanic manifestations that were part of the initiatory process would have been re-enacted by a combination of members of the priestly personnel and the participants in the secret rites.

As far as Eleusis is concerned, some of our later sources attest to a dramatization of the sacred myth of the cult.[70] Clement of Alexandria, in particular, tells us that the two goddesses, Demeter and Persephone, were the subject matter of this *drama mystikon*, and by way of explanation he adds: 'and Eleusis celebrates with torches the rape of the daughter and the sorrowful wandering of the mother'.[71] Other sources lay extra emphasis on the active role of the priestess of Demeter and Kore in the acting out of the sacred myth of the abduction of Persephone, Demeter's quest for her daughter, and their final joyous reunion. Tertullian, in particular, reports that the priestess of Demeter was abducted during the sacred re-enactment.[72] This (admittedly late) source, then, makes it possible, if not probable, that Demeter's priestess re-enacted the sufferings of the goddess. The problem is, which goddess? From all we know, it is not Demeter that gets abducted, but Kore. Mylonas made a reasonable and yet problematic suggestion: the priestess of Demeter was carried off, while impersonating Persephone.[73] Bérard also thinks that the priestess impersonated Kore in her climactic epiphany and maintains that such an apparition would perfectly suit the Platonic

[68] Dio Chrys. *Or.* 36.33–5. [69] Bérard (1974, 93).

[70] E.g.: Gregory Nazianzenus, *Or.* 39.4: *οὐδὲ κόρη τις ἡμῖν ἁρπάζεται, καὶ Δημήτηρ πλανᾶται, καὶ Κελεούς τινας ἐπεισάγει, καὶ Τριπτολέμους, καὶ δράκοντας, καὶ τὰ μὲν ποιεῖ, τὰ δὲ πάσχει*; Lactantius, *Div. Inst. Epit.* 23: 'His etiam Cereris simile mysterium est, in quo facibus accensis per noctem Proserpina inquitur et ea inventa ritus omnis gratulatione et taedarum iactatione finitur'; Apollodorus Gramm. *FGrHist* 244F 110b: *Φησὶν Ἀπολλόδωρος Ἀθήνησι τὸν ἱεροφάντην τῆς Κόρης ἐπικαλουμένης ἐπικρούειν τὸ λεγόμενον ἠχεῖον. Καὶ παρὰ Λάκωσι, βασιλέως ἀποθανόντος, εἰώθασι κρούειν λέβητα.*

[71] Clem. Alex. *Protrept.* 2.12: *Δηὼ δὲ καὶ Κόρη δρᾶμα ἤδη ἐγενέσθην μυστικόν, καὶ τὴν πλάνην καὶ τὴν ἁρπαγὴν καὶ τὸ πένθος αὐταῖν Ελευσὶς δᾳδουχεῖ.*

[72] *Ad Nationes* 2.7. [73] Mylonas (1961, 310).

description of the initiates' experiences as *eudaimona phasmata*.[74] But if the priestess of Demeter impersonated both the mother and the daughter, it would not be possible, as Clinton and Sourvinou-Inwood have rightly objected, to have the climactic scene of their reunion re-enacted.[75] More plausible solutions include the *hierophantis* of Demeter playing the goddess and Demeter's priestess impersonating Kore, or, as Clinton has suggested, both goddesses being impersonated by their *hierophantides*.[76] The truth is that the lateness, the fragmentary state, and the cryptic character of our sources, together with the secretive nature of the cult, do not allow us to rise above the level of speculation.

The *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*: an insight into mystic epiphanies at Eleusis?

As argued in chapter 1, we can trace at least two forms of epiphanic revelation before the arrival at Eleusis (on the 20th of Boedromion) that were part of the public aspect of the festival of Eleusis: the *pars pro toto* arrival of Demeter in Athens in the form of her *hiera*, and the Iacchus *effigies* epiphany in the course of the *pompē* to the Eleusinian Telesterion. Consequently, everybody partaking in the festival, not simply the *mystai*, would have perceived these epiphanies. Moreover they would have served as a psychological preparation, as a preconditioning, for the epiphanies inside the Telesterion. In the current section, I argue that Demeter's gradual epiphanic revelation and the gradual intensification of its perceivers' reactions in the Homeric hymn, may reflect, at least to some extent, the structure of the secret ritual counterpart of the hymn and the epiphanies that took place in the secret aspect of the Great Mysteries festival.[77]

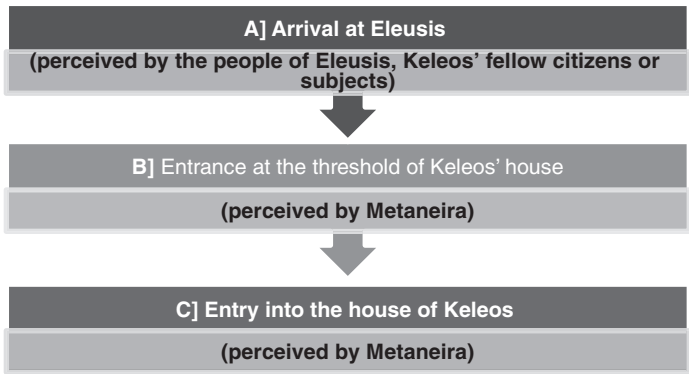
[74] Bérard (1974, 97); Pl. *Phdr*. 250c.

[75] Clinton (1992, 131); Sourvinou-Inwood (2003a, 29).

[76] Clinton (1992, 131).

[77] The thorny issue of the occasion of performance of the hymn is too big and complex to be discussed here in detail: despite the copious efforts of students of Greek religion to address successfully both the problems of narrative unity and that of the peculiarities of the content of the narrative (see more on that in Clay 1997, 503f.), no consensus has yet been achieved. The fact that Athens remains conspicuously absent in the hymn has led some scholars to believe that it should be dated to the pre-Solon reforms and that the occasion was probably that of a local festival at Eleusis (Richardson (1974, 5–12). But serious doubts have been raised concerning the early independence of Eleusis from Athens, while other more radical views (such as Clinton 1992, who claims that the hymn's allusions are to the festival of Thesmophoria, not that of Eleusis; he is followed by Suter 2002) have been put forward. I am more inclined to agree with Parker (1991), who reads in the hymn 'a Panhellenic myth in a local aetiological setting'. Notwithstanding the difficulty of establishing an occasion of performance with some certainty, there is little doubt, at least in my mind, that: a) the author of the hymn was addressing potential initiands, b) the myth is the *aition* for the establishment of the mystery rites in Eleusis (note here that the hymn culminates with establishment of the rites (*Hymn. Hom. Cer*. 471, 474) not with the gifts of agriculture as in some other versions), c) the whole gamut of human emotions as depicted in the hymn (such as the alternation of terror and trepidation with joy) reflect to an extent the psychological *peripeteia* of the initiates of Eleusis, as we know it from the late Christian authors; and, finally, d) the hymn mentions a set of events that seems to reflect a set of events in the cult of the mysteries: Demeter's fasting; Iambe's efforts to amuse Demeter; Demeter's drinking of the Kykeon; Demeter's nursing of Demophoon. All these are literary reflections of cultic events, and this suggestion is further supported by the end of the story, when Demeter establishes the festival of the mysteries (473–82).

The theme of Demeter's *epiphaneia* as motivated by Kore's *aphaneia* is central to the hymn.[78] A crisis amongst the gods—Kore's abduction by Hades and her subsequent descent (*katagōgē*) to the underworld, to which Zeus consents, but Demeter objects—motivates the goddess's advent on earth and in Eleusis (91–3).[79] Her epiphany unfolds gradually, taking us through three different stages of partial revelation to the climactic full-scale revelation. The course of action can be sketched out as a centripetal orbit, as the goddess moves from the periphery of Eleusis to its centre:


A] Arrival at Eleusis
(perceived by the people of Eleusis, Keleos' fellow citizens or subjects)
B] Entrance at the threshold of Keleos' house
(perceived by Metaneira)
C] Entry into the house of Keleos
(perceived by Metaneira)

Demeter travels around the cities of men in the likeness of a *trophos*.[80] Stage A is marked by the impenetrability of her disguise (94–7). None of the mortals who confront the divine visitor penetrates her disguise, though they lay eyes on her: *οὐδέ τις ἀνδρῶν | εἰσορόων γίγνωσκε βαθυζώνων τε γυναικῶν*. Here is another application of the Homeric antithesis *ἰδεῖν γιγνώσκειν*, which is of cardinal importance to what we called earlier 'the epistemological aspect' of an epiphany and which is heavily emphasized throughout the whole text of the hymn. Vision (*idein*) cannot guarantee cognitive perception and analysis (*gignōskein*): the people of Eleusis see the goddess, but do not recognize her identity. Similarly, when Demeter encounters the daughters of Keleos near the Parthenion well, all four of them see the disguised goddess (*τὴν δὲ ἴδον*) but none of them perceives her

[78] I am not simply stressing the terms here. The term *aphaneia* is not attested, but the adjective and the passive aorist participle are. Cf., for instance, Aristid. *Or.* 22.3 Keil; and Diod. Sic. 5.5.1 Diodorus quotes a fourth-century tragedian Karkinos (= Timaeus Hist. *FGrHist* F 3b,566,F, fr. 164), who wrote the following lines to honour the Kore's *Katagōgē* festival in Sicily: *λέγουσι Δήμητρός ποτ' ἄρρητον κόρην Πλούτωνα κρυφίοις ἁρπάσαι βουλεύμασιν δῦναί τε γαίας εἰς μελαμφαεῖς μυχούς· πόθῳ δὲ μητέρ' ἠφανισμένης κόρης μαστῆρ' ἐπελθεῖν πᾶσαν ἐν κύκλῳ χθόνα*; *en kyklōi* here may allude to a mimetic dance that would re-enact the sorrowful wanderings of the goddess.

[79] We remind ourselves here of the pun Aelius Aristides makes in his *Eleusinios* (*Or.* 12 Dindorf = *Or.* 22 Keil) between *Ἐλευσίς* (= Eleusis) and *ἔλευσις* (= coming); Eleusis is the land of the arrival, the land of Demeter's advent. See Humbel (1994) ad loc.

[80] [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.29: *εἰκασθεῖσα δὲ γυναικὶ ἧκεν εἰς Ἐλευσῖνα*; compare here the Orphic Hymn to Demeter (Fr. 40, 12), in which the goddess is said to be manifest and gentle to everyone (*σὺ χθονία, σὺ δὲ φαινομένη, σὺ δε πᾶσι προσηνής*); while lines 17–18 emphasize her multiformity: *ἧς πολλαὶ μορφαί, πολυάνθεμοι, ἱεροθαλεῖς. | ἐλθέ, μάκαιρ', ἁγνή, καρποῖς βρίθουσα θερείοις, κτλ.* Note here that the emphasis is on the goddess's perception by her human devotees.

true nature (*οὔδ' ἔγνον*). In stage B, Demeter steps onto the threshold of Keleos' house and gives only hints of her identity. Metaneira's reactions correspond to the goddess's partial revelation: she suspects there is something godlike about the stranger, but she cannot put her finger on it. Stage C, which follows her frustrated attempt to immortalize Metaneira's son, Demophon, marks the climax of the goddess's revelation. Demeter finally reveals her identity (268: *εἰμὶ δὲ Δημήτηρ τιμάοχος*) and orders the building of a great temple and an altar in her honour;[81] in return, she will establish her sacred rites (273: *ὄργια δ' αὐτὴ ἐγὼν ὑποθήσομαι*), so that the people will perform them with due reverence and earn her favour.

If we compare the two passages describing Metaneira's reactions in stages B (188–90) and C (275–81) of the revelatory process, we see that they both abound in typical epiphanic *semeia*: compare here the supernatural size of the goddess and the light (*σέλας*) that surrounds her as she steps onto the threshold of the *oikos* of Keleos. Metaneira, the human perceiver of the epiphany, responds accordingly; she experiences awe (*αἰδώς*), reverence (*σέβας*), and fear (*δέος*), though she does not fully decipher the morphological riddle the divine stranger poses. However, the description of the epiphanic *sēmeia* and the reactions of the human perceiver are substantially more extensive and detailed in stage C: this time the goddess undergoes a radical transformation in terms of her size (*μέγεθος*) and appearance (*εἶδος*), while during the epiphanic revelation in stage B she simply magnified her current outward appearance. There follows a quite detailed description of the goddess's body as imbued with beauty (*κάλλος*), fragrance (*ὀδμὴ ἱμερόεσσα*), radiance (*φέγγος*), and brightness (*αὐγή*). While Demeter's climactic revelation takes place, light floods not simply the threshold, as in stage B, but the whole house. This kind of light has the intensity of lightning. Light (in the form of torches?) must also have featured at a climactic stage in the actual rite, if we are to judge from passages that refer to the brilliant light in the midst of which the hierophant appeared holding the *kistae* with the *hiera* when the Anaktoron was opened.[82]

When confronted with the goddess's full-scale epiphany, Metaneira collapses speechless and totally oblivious of her baby. As Smith puts it: 'this appropriate amplification in her reaction corresponds to the increased openness of the goddess's self-revelation'.[83] In the meantime, Metaneira's daughters are at pains to soothe the baby and their mother and rekindle the fire. The first one places Demophon in her *κόλπος*, the second one takes care of the fire, and the third

[81] In her climactic epiphany Demeter reveals herself using a formula, which is typical of divine revelations: *εἰμὶ δ' ἐγὼ Διὸς υἱός, Ἀπόλλων δ' εὔχομαι εἶναι* (*Hymn. Hom. Ven.* 480); *Διὸς δέ τοι ἄγγελός εἰμι* (*Il.* 2.26, said of Oneiros) = 24.173 (said of Iris); *αὐτὰρ ἐγώ τοί εἰμι Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων* (*Od.* 11.252); *αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ θεός εἰμι* (*Od.* 20.47). The *ἥκω* formula is more often in tragedy: cf. for instance: *Ion* 5 (Apollo), *Tro.* 1 (Poseidon), *Hec.* 1 (Polydorus' *phasma* in a dream), *Bacch.* 1 (Dionysus), but the 'I have come' formula is not absent in the epics, e.g. *Il.* 24.460–1: *ὦ γέρον ἦ τοι ἐγὼ θεὸς ἄμβροτος εἰλήλουθα | Ἑρμείας.*

[82] Plut. *de profect. virt.* 81e; compare here *IG* II² 3811 = *I.Eleusis* 637, the funerary inscription of a 75-year-old hierophant from Attica. The inscription is visible in the archaeological space of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in Eleusis. For more on the form and the function of light in the cult of the two goddesses see Parisinou, E. (2000, 136–50). On the *hieronymia* of the hierophant see Clinton (1974) and (2005 ad loc.).

[83] Smith (1981, 45, n. 48).

one *μητέρ' ἀναστήσουσα ἐκ θαλάμοιο*. Evelyn-White's translation at this point is misleading: 'she rushed with soft feet to bring their mother from her fragrant chamber'; and West's translating the line as 'to help her mother up from the scented chamber' does not convey the exact cultic connotations of *ἀνίστημι*.[84] Metaneira was in the room, where the epiphany took place. Maybe the girls were in a different room and heard something and rushed to help their mother. The verb in this active voice can mean 'raise up' somebody who is lying down on the ground,[85] or 'raise someone from sleep, wake up',[86] or even 'raise somebody from the dead'.[87] The closest parallel to our text is Demosthenes' *On the Crown*, 259 (*καὶ καθαίρων τοὺς τελουμένους καὶ ἀπομάττων τῷ πηλῷ καὶ τοῖς πιτύροις, καὶ ἀνιστὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ καθαρμοῦ κελεύων λέγειν 'ἔφυγον κακόν, εὗρον ἄμεινον'*),[88] the context being the mystic initiation in the Dionysos Sabazios mysteries performed by Aeschines' mother.[89] The initiates had to sit or lie down to receive the *katharmos* from the plastered clay and the bran that were stuck on them; they had to be lifted up by the *mystagōgos* or his helpers, as in Aeschines' case.[90]

It is clear that Demeter's epiphany left Metaneira either lying or seated on the floor (this is the meaning that *γούνατ' ἔλυντο* of 281 conveyed in the first place) in a state where she was neither dead nor fully active and conscious, but something in between. Compare here how Metaneira is positioned in relation to the goddess in the well-known Apulian hydria (Fig. 6.3): the mortal woman is crouching in front of the enthroned goddess and raises her hands in adoration. Metaneira's reactions to Demeter's full-scale epiphany resemble those of the chorus in the *Bacchae*, where they fall on the ground and do not actually rise before Dionysus himself orders them to do so:

> *{Δι.} βάρβαροι γυναῖκες, οὕτως ἐκπεπληγμέναι φόβωι*
> *πρὸς πέδωι πεπτώκατ'; ἤισθεσθ', ὡς ἔοικε, Βακχίου* 605
> *διατινάξαντος †δῶμα Πενθέως· ἀλλ' ἐξανίστατε†*
> *σῶμα καὶ θαρσεῖτε σαρκὸς ἐξαμείψασαι τρόμον.*[91]
>
> [Dion.] Barbarian women, are you so distraught with fear
> That you have fallen to the ground? You perceived, so it seems,
> Bacchus' shattering Pentheus' palace; but upraise
> Your body and cheer up having shaken off the trembling of the flesh.

This escalation of intensity in both the epiphanic *sēmeia* and the reactions of the human perceiver from stage B to stage C may allude to the two different degrees of initiation into the mysteries, that of the *myēsis* and that of the *epopteia*. It should

[84] West (2003, ad loc.). [85] *Il.* 24.515; *Od.* 14.319; Soph. *Aj.* 788.
[86] *Il.* 10.32. [87] *Il.* 24.551; Aesch. *Ag.* 1361; Soph. *El.* 139.
[88] Meaning 'raising them up from their *katharmos* ('lustration') and bidding them say: "I have escaped the evil, I have found the better."' On Demosthenes' passage see Usher's commentary.
[89] This is indeed a very vivid, even theatrical, representation of Aeschines' childhood activities, which is, of course, in harmony with the dramatic overtones of the whole speech. More on this in Duncan (2006, 74–82).
[90] For *καθαρμός* as one of the stages (or degrees) of initiation in the mysteries of Eleusis see Mylonas (1961, 236).
[91] Wilamovitz following Musgrave emends 606 as follows: *τὰ Πενθέως δώματ' ἐκ δ' ἀνίστατε*. The *ἐξ* before *ἀνίστατε* may be due to *ἐξαμείψασαι* of the next line. See Dodds (1960 ad loc.). Cf. also Aesch. *Cho.* 963–4, where the reference is to an exhortation to the personified royal *oikos* that has spent far too much time lying on the ground, to rise up: *ἄναγε μὰν δόμοι· πολὺν ἄγαν χρόνον | χαμαιπετεῖς ἔκεισθε.*

not be surprising if a hymn, which accounts for the secret rites ordained by Demeter in Eleusis, actually reflects these very rites in its narrative structure. Stage A of the divine revelation could correspond to the preliminary and preparatory stage of the initiatory process (known also as *proteleia*),[92] while stages B and C could allude to *myēsis* and the further advanced stage of *epopteia*. This reading is further supported by the prominence of the antithesis between *idein* and *gignōskein*: not everybody is capable of having and indeed sustaining a vision of a god whilst simultaneously avoiding physical harm, mental illness, or indeed death. Appropriate physical and psychological preparation is therefore necessary, and on a cultic level this would have been provided by the preliminary ritual. It is of significance that despite her godlike looks (*theoeikelos*), Demeter is not recognized by Metaneira's daughters in stage A; and the goddess's supernatural stature and radiance produce only partial awareness of the outlandish nature of the stranger, when perceived by Metaneira; her disguise remains impenetrable. Both Metaneira and her daughters see, but they fail to understand. It is only after Demeter's full-scale revelation that the human perceivers fully comprehend the divine status of the anthropomorphized goddess. The different phases of Demeter's gradual revelation (from total secrecy (A) to partial (B) and then to full epiphany (C)) can be read as coinciding with the three gradually advancing phases of initiation. The further the humans went with their initiation, the clearer Demeter and her true nature became.[93] The three different levels of initiation (*proteleia*, *myēsis*, *epopteia*) may be reflected in the three different stages of Demeter's revelation, which provoke corresponding kinds of emotional response in the human participants of the mysteries.

That the hymn reflects cultic realities is further supported by lines 292–3: the night that follows Demeter's epiphany the women of the house of Keleos sought to propitiate the goddess with a *παννυχίς* while they themselves were still quaking with fear: *αἳ μὲν παννύχιαι κυδρὴν θεὸν ἱλάσκοντο δείματι παλλόμεναι*.[94] The reference here is clearly to the reactions of the initiates in the mysteries. However, the actual foundation of the mysteries does not take place until line 470—that is, not until Persephone returns from the underworld, though they have been first mentioned in 273. Parker ingeniously suggests that the first mention of the rites at 273 could be read as the poem's equivalent to *myesis*, while the final revelation at 474 as the poem's equivalent to *epopteia*.[95] Indeed, there may be more than one way to read the hymn as a literary initiation into the secret rites of Eleusis.

[92] Them. *Or*. 5.71.

[93] To the obvious question why it is Demeter's epiphany, and not that of Kore, that is painstakingly presented in the hymn, the Scholiast of Aristophanes' *Ploutos*, 845 provides a possible answer: 'The Greater Mysteries were Demeter's and the Lesser Persephone's, Demeter's daughter.' The Samian poet Douris (as quoted by Athenaeus 6,253D) composed an ode in honour of Kore, where we are told that Demeter comes as a guest to attend the Lesser Mysteries, which are called 'the solemn mysteries of Kore'.

[94] For *πάλλομαι* meaning 'quiver, leap' esp. in fear see *Il*. 24.452 and 461; Aesch. *Cho*. 410; and most importantly Hdt. 7.140, where the reference is to Aristonike's well-known oracle given to the Athenians exhorting them to abandon the city: *πῦρ τε καὶ ὀξὺς Ἄρης, συριηγενὲς ἅρμα διώκων . . . πολλοὺς δ' ἀθανάτων νηοὺς μαλερῷ πυρὶ δώσει, | οἵ που νῦν ἱδρῶτι ῥεούμενοι ἑστήκασι, | δείματι παλλόμενοι, κατὰ δ' ἀκροτάτοις ὀρόφοισιν | αἷμα μέλαν κέχυται κτλ*. The temples are described as sweating and shivering with fear, since they experience a feeling of stressful anticipation: they foresee their destruction by the Persians.

[95] Parker (1991, 13).

Fig. 6.3. Apulian red-figure hydria, dated *c.*340 BC, depicting Metaneira and Demeter. Altes Museum, Berlin (Inv. 1984.46).

Synopsis

Demeter's divine revelation in the hymn narrative is largely organized on the basis of antithetical juxtaposition between superficial anthropomorphic appearance and profound divine substance. The search for 'the god within' is on, and so is the search for knowledge and enlightenment (ritual and physical alike). The previous section has made an attempt to discover what the ultimate epiphanic

experience would entail for the *mystai* by focusing closely on the reactions of the mortal perceivers when confronted with Demeter's gradual and full-scale divine epiphanies in the homonymous hymn. If we are to judge from the hymn, the perceiver's reactions to mystic epiphanies appear to have been far more intensified (when compared to analogous reactions in other contexts) and to have involved extreme expressions of agony, fear, and trepidation. This element ties up well with what has been noted about mystic initiations recreating death-like experiences, so as to shake the foundation of the old self and fertilize the ground for the establishment of a new enlightened self.

As a whole, mystic epiphanies share some concomitant *sēmeia* with other contexts, such as sublime beauty and awe-inspiring size, as well as light and fragrance, the two latter clearly being borrowed from the counterpart cultic reality. Nonetheless, mystic epiphanies have a distinct epistemological aspect: they are tools of gradual introduction into mysteric knowledge that, if it takes place suddenly and without the necessary preparation, could prove to be anything from useless to dangerous; but if it falls into the properly ploughed ground, can bring forth the light of knowledge and awareness (of one's mortality?) and disperse the fear of darkness, the unknown, and ultimately the fear of death.

EPIPHANIC FESTIVALS: CELEBRATING THE PRESENCE OF THE GODS, CELEBRATING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GODS

> *οὐ γὰρ οἴνου πλῆθος οὐδ' ὄπτησις κρεῶν τὸ εὐφραῖνόν ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς ἑορταῖς, ἀλλ' ἐλπὶς ἀγαθὴ καὶ δόξα τοῦ παρεῖναι τὸν θεὸν εὐμενῆ καὶ δέχεσθαι τὰ γινόμενα κεχαρισμένως. αὐλὸν μὲν γὰρ ἐνίων ἑορτῶν καὶ στέφανον ἀφαιροῦμεν, θεοῦ δὲ θυσίᾳ μὴ παρόντος πρὸς ἱερῶν ἀποδοχὴν ἄθεόν ἐστι καὶ ἀνεόρταστον καὶ ἀνενθουσίαστον τὸ λειπόμενον· μᾶλλον δὲ <τὸ> ὅλον ἀτερπὲς αὐτῷ καὶ λυπηρόν·*
>
> For it is not the abundance of wine or the roasting of meat that makes the joy of festivals, but good hope and the belief that the god is present in his kindness and graciously accepts what is offered. While we may leave out of some festivals the music of the pipes and the custom of garlanding ourselves with wreaths, but if the god is not present to receive the sacrificial offerings, then the rest of the ceremony is impious and unholy and stripped of its religious significance and fervour; instead the remaining ceremony becomes rather unpleasant and distressing to him.
>
> Plut. *Non Posse* 1102a

The basic idea behind the passage quoted above is that in a number of public religious festivals, a deity or a group of deities were thought of as present and as partaking in the joyous feasting and revelling along with the human participants. In this section I examine this type of festival, which celebrates the arrival or the departure, the appearance or the disappearance, of a deity in a cultic context. I have already touched on the topic in chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems', where I discussed whether Phye's epiphanic procession followed the ritual grammar of one of these *anodos* festivals. Since epiphanic festivals are the public festivities

wherein divine arrival or departure comes to the foreground and is celebrated either as the main event or, at least, as one of the main festive themes, this type of festive activity is of great significance for our subject.

An epiphanic festival may celebrate the *hapax* arrival of a god to assist his chosen people in a battle, or to protect them from the besieging enemy, as we saw in chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies'; alternatively an epiphanic festival may have been initiated to commemorate occasions when a deity averted a plague, a disease, or a famine, as discussed in chapter 3 on healing epiphanies; or it may have been the cultic context of a closer communication between the human and divine spheres, which probably finds its most extreme manifestation in festivals where a deity is imagined as having sexual intercourse with a human, as shown in chapter 5 (where I looked at erotic epiphanies). Epiphanic festivals, as we have seen in chapter 2, were also fertile ground for stratagems of a political or sexual nature.[96]

As mentioned in chapter 2, of the two ways of making contact with the divine, the way of the word (oracular request, prayer, hymn, etc.) and the way of the deed (sacrifice, offerings, votive gifts, dramatization of sacred myths, etc.),[97] an epiphanic festival combines both.[98] More significantly, an epiphanic festival commemorates and celebrates a divine manifestation that took place in the past, while it simultaneously secures divine alliance and protection for the times to come. In many cases, a ritual re-enactment of the divine epiphany was an integral part of the festival. Celebrating a divine manifestation, which took place in a crisis and helped the community to deal with it, is, in a sense, a way to recreate the event in the memory of those who possibly had experienced it, and to imprint it in the cultural memory of those who were not present. It provided an excellent opportunity to renew the community's bonds with their civic gods (especially those mobile divinities like Dionysus, Herakles, Apollo, Demeter, etc.), secure divine blessings for the generations to come, and simultaneously to reaffirm the good old civic values. But because contact with the divine could be an ambiguous and potentially dangerous process when unexpected and unprepared, epiphanic festivals also represent an attempt on behalf of the human worshippers to control and regulate the divine visitations via means of ritual performance.[99]

Instead of the more restrictive terms 'arrival festivals' and 'advent festivals', as some of these festivities were more commonly known, I opted for the broader and more flexible term 'epiphanic festivals', so as to include all the festivals that celebrate a divine manifestation that took place some time in the mythical or historical past at a time of crisis either for the community or the individual. The arrival or advent festivals are treated rather as a subgroup of the broader epiphanic festivals category. One of the great advantages of a broader definition is that it allows for a wider picture and a holistic appreciation of the cultic/festive

[96] See the 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?' section.

[97] Versnel (1987, 8, n. 12).

[98] Compare here the cletic hymn that aimed at epiphanizing the divine for the participants, as sung by the women of Elis during the Dionysiac epiphanic festival of Thyia: Paus. 6.21.1–2; Theopompos of Chios *FGrHist* 115 fr. 277; Plut. *Aet. Gr.* 299a. Cf. also the more sophisticated cletic hymn to Apollo, as composed by Alcaeus for the famous epiphanic festival of Delia: Him. *Or.* 48.10–11 (pp. 200–1 Colonna) = fr. 307 Campbell.

[99] Compare, for instance, the ritual prohibitions in Callimachus' *Hymn to Athena* that regulate ritual contact with the cult statue of the goddess.

expression of the epiphanic schema, while it also allows for extra emphasis to be laid on the commemorative aspect of the schema. It is true, nonetheless, that the presence of the divine is not the central commemorative event in every single one of the epiphanic festivals discussed below. In the majority of these festivals divine epiphanies are certainly a major feature, but not necessarily the only one. In some epiphanic festivals, for instance, the celebratory focus is the military victory achieved via divine manifestation and in others it is the salvific impact that it has on the health and the well-being of the citizenry and livestock. However, divine presence and absence does become the focal point of celebration in at least two subgroups of epiphanic festivals: a) those called advent or arrival festivals, and b) the *xenia* festivals.

Divine *epidēmia*: advent festivals and divine mobility

Apollo, Dionysus, Demeter, and Kore/Persephone are the most common divinities whose epiphany is celebrated in the so-called advent or arrival festivals.[100] I use the term here as coined by Sourvinou-Inwood and Burkert.[101] The idea behind these festivals is that the divinity has temporarily left a place and the people experience either his/her absence or his/her triumphant return. Alternatively, an advent festival may celebrate a deity's original advent to a place, or his/her birth, which is also perceived to be a sudden divine manifestation. Technical terms that denote the reception of a divine birth epiphany include *ἀποδοχή*, *ὑποδοχή*, *ἀποδέχεσθαι*, *ὑποδέχεσθαι*, and their cognates. Compare here the difficulties Phoebus' ritual reception entails (*οὐδέ τις ἔτλη Φοῖβον δέξασθαι*), as presented in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (47–55), where Leto's request for accommodation is rejected by a great number of islands. Initially, even Delos (63–73) seemed to have been equally beleaguered and terrified at the prospect of witnessing the birth epiphany of the *atasthalos* god. She would have been willing to accommodate his birth (*ἀσπασίη κεν ἐγώ γε γονὴν ἑκάτοιο ἄνακτος δεξαίμην*, *κτλ.*), we are told in the hymnic narrative, but she has heard that the new god will be arrogant towards both mortals and immortals. What she fears is that as soon as he is born he will sink the island and build his temple elsewhere. She finally yields, however, when Leto takes an oath that Apollo's temple will be on Delos, and the

[100] In Sicily, we also find Aphrodite of Eryx as an ever-coming and going deity: Ael. *NA* 4.2; *VH* 1.15; and the following fragment from the historical works of Charon of Lampsacus (*FGrHist* 262 F3 = Athen. *Deipn*. 9.394e Olson): *Χάρων δ' ὁ Λαμψακηνός φησιν ὅτε τὸ μετὰ Μαρδονίου στράτευμα ἐφθάρη περὶ τὸν Ἄθω λευκὰς περιστερὰς τὸ πρῶτον εἰς Ἕλληνας φανῆναι πρότερον οὐ γινομένας. ὅτι ἐν Ἐρυκι τῆς Σικελίας κατὰ καιρόν, ὃν καλοῦσιν Ἀναγωγάς, ἐν ᾧ φασιν Ἀφροδίτην εἰς Λιβύην ἀνάγεσθαι, αἱ περὶ τὸν τόπον περιστεραὶ ἀφανεῖς γίνονται ὡς συναποδημοῦσαι αὐτῇ. καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ἐννέα ἐν τοῖς λεγομένοις Καταγωγίοις μιᾶς προπετασθείσης ἐκ τοῦ πελάγους καὶ εἰς τὸν νεὼν εἰσπτάσης παραγίνονται καὶ αἱ λοιπαί. εὐωχοῦνται οὖν τότε οἱ περίοικοι, ὅσοι περιουσίας εὖ ἤκουσιν, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ κροταλίζουσιν, ὄζει τε πᾶς ὁ τόπος τότε βούτυρον, ᾧ δὴ τεκμηρίῳ χρῶνται τῆς θείας ἐπανόδου.*

[101] See Sourvinou-Inwood (2003a), who is the first, at least to my knowledge, to have most ingeniously discussed the public facet of the Eleusinian Mysteries in the context of these festivals; Burkert (1986).

island will become the most renowned of the god's cult centres.[102] The same terminology is used in Callimachus' *Bath of Pallas* (5.138–40) for the reception of Athena in the form of her cult statue during Plynteria, her renowned Argive festival: *ἔρχετ' Ἀθαναίᾳ νῦν ἀτρεκές· ἀλλὰ δέχεσθε | τὰν θεόν, ὦ κῶραι, τῶργον ὅσαις μέλεται, | σύν τ' εὐαγορίᾳ σύν τ' εὔγμασι σύν τ' ὀλολυγαῖς*.[103] The term is also attested in an inscription (*IG* II^2 847, 1164), which records the preparations of the new Athenian *phylae* (Antigonis and Demetrias) for the Eleusinian Mysteries, probably dating to the third century BC. The term *ὑποδοχή* here denotes the reception of Iacchus in the form of his statue in Eleusis on the night of the 21st of Boedromion: *ἐπεμελήθησαν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἄλαδε ἐλάσε[ως] | καὶ τῆς Ἐλευσῖνι τοῦ Ἰαάκχου ὑποδοχῆς κτλ*.

The terms *παρουσία* and *ἐπιδημία* are also used (often interchangeably) to denote periodic divine manifestation in a festival context. Diodorus, for instance, mentions Demeter's *parousia* in Attica (*καὶ τῆς θεοῦ δὲ παρουσίαν εἰς τὴν Ἀττικὴν γεγονυῖαν*), which was consequently commemorated in the public aspect of the Eleusinian festival, as well as Dionysus' triennial bacchic festivals in a number of the great cities that celebrated the first arrival of the god (*καὶ καθόλου τὴν παρουσίαν ὑμνεῖν τοῦ Διονύσου*).[104] The same author uses the terms *epidēmia*, *parousia*, and *epiphaneia* as synonymous when denoting periodic divine manifestation. It is to this periodic divine manifestation that the much-awaited arrival of Ion the Platonist in Lucian's *Symposium* (7.6) gets compared. In particular, Ion's arrival is heralded as a *theou epidēmia*, that is as an expected (or rather ritually regulated) and yet extremely exciting divine visitation: 'When he came in, they all arose in his honour and received him like a supernatural human being; in short it was a regular divine visitation (*καὶ ὅλως θεοῦ ἐπιδημία τὸ πρᾶγμα ἦν*), the advent of Ion the marvellous (*Ἴων ὁ θαυμαστὸς*).'[105]

Apollo's birth and his Theophania festival

As mentioned in the introductory section, an epiphanic festival may commemorate the birth of a deity or his periodic return from abroad or departure to a foreign land, that is, his *epidēmia* or *apodēmia*.[106] Alternatively, a god's arrival to a place and his birthday (i.e. his arrival in life) may be celebrated together. In Delos, for instance, Apollo's *epidēmia* was celebrated in the Delia festival, the main epiphanic festival in honour of the god.[107] The festival was held every four years on the 7th of the Hieros month (February/March) on the sacred ground of

[102] On the hymn's performative context see Nagy (1994), Clay (1989) and (1994), Martin (2000b), and Bakker (2002); on Apollo's representation in the hymn, see Miller (1986), Lord (1994), Birge (1994), and Solomon (1994).

[103] On epiphany in Callimachus' *Bath of Pallas* and *Hymn to Apollo*, see Henrichs (1993b), Vestrheim (2002), and Hunter and Fuhrer (2002).

[104] Diod. Sic. 1.29.2 and 4.3.3.

[105] Lucian, *Symp*. 7 Macleod.

[106] More on the concept of *apodēmia* and its place in the civic cultic activities in 'Dionysus' and Kore's advent festivals' below.

[107] A vivid poetic description of the choral-mimetic performances in the Delia festival is to be found at *Hymn. Hom. Ap*. 146ff.; esp. 156–64. See Clay (1989, 49).

Delos.[108] In the intervening three years the Apollonia, another festival that commemorated the birth of the god, was held in place of the prestigious and costly Delia. As for Apollo's birthday, that was celebrated three months later, on the 7th of Thargelion.

In Delphi, Apollo's other major cult centre, the god's birthday was thought to be on the 7th of the month Bysios, the equivalent of the Delian Hieros. This was also the day that, according to the tradition, the god returned from the Hyperboreans, where he spent the three winter months. The Theophania (*Θεοφάνια*) festival was then established to celebrate both the god's birthday and his *epidēmia*.[109] It was in the context of the Delphic festival of Theophania, according to Himerius, that the people called upon Apollo to leave the land of the Hyperboreans and appear to them (*ἐκάλουν τὸν θεὸν ἐξ Ὑπερβορέων ἐλθεῖν*), via a paean Alcaeus wrote for the occasion.[110] Apollo was not however the only inhabitant of Delphi. According to Plutarch Apollo leaves Delphi for the three winter months and Dionysus takes his place and occupies Apollo's cult centre.[111] According to Himerius' detailed summary of Alcaeus' hymn, Apollo returns (*ἐπιδημεῖ*) to Delphi and manifests himself while riding a winged chariot drawn by swans.[112]

Divine birth celebrated as a sudden manifestation of divine presence, and so as an epiphany of the deity, is a cross-culturally attested phenomenon, as shown by Herodotus' narrative of the Egyptian birth epiphany of Apis: the god was said to appear after long intervals having assumed a bovine likeness (*οἱ δὲ ἔφραζον ὡς σφι θεὸς εἴη φανεὶς διὰ χρόνου πολλοῦ ἐωθὼς ἐπιφαίνεσθαι*).[113] Whenever this theriomorphic god Apis, or Epaphus, as the Greeks call him, appears the Egyptians dress the unique black calf with all the marks of divinity (which include a white diamond on his forehead, the image of an eagle on his back, double hairs on its tail, and a scarab under his tongue) in precious garments and rejoice in festivities which included communal dining (*ἐπιφανέος δὲ τούτου γενομένου αὐτίκα οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι εἵματά τε ἐφόρεον τὰ κάλλιστα καὶ ἦσαν ἐν θαλίῃσι.*).

It is of great significance that the verb used to describe divine visitations on certain dates of public festivities is *ἐπιδημεῖν*.[114] The same verb is used for strangers and travellers who visit a city. In all likelihood, Greek gods and heroes endowed with extreme mobility were perceived as strangers who visited civic

[108] According to the myth as found at *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 49ff. Delos was the only place that was courageous enough to accept the invitation to be the birthplace of the almighty god.

[109] Cf. Herod. 1. 51 (*ἐπικίρναται γὰρ ὑπὸ Δελφῶν Θεοφανίοισι·*). How and Wells ad loc.: 'a spring festival that commemorated the reappearance of the sun-god'. Other epiphanic festivals included the well-known festival of Pythia (*τὰ Πύθια*), celebrated six months after the god's *epidēmia*, and the Theoxenia (*τὰ Θεοξένια*), which shall be discussed below.

[110] Himer. *Or.* 48.10–11.

[111] Plut. *De E apud Delph.* 384d–394c. Cf. also *Quaest. Gr.* 292.

[112] For Apollo's *epidemia* in spring see Call. *Aet.* Fr. 75.26; *Hymn.* 2.13; 3.225. Note here that chariots are a standard feature of festival processions in both Greece and the Near East; cf. Burkert's laconic aphorism (1986, 86): 'no god without chariot'. The same iconography (Apollo arriving on a chariot drawn by swans) is found on a krater from Melos: Simon (1982, 127, fig. 120).

[113] Hdt. 3.27.3.

[114] See, for instance, Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 3.24 and Him. *Or.* 48.10–11, which contains a summary of Apollo's paean as composed for the Delia festival: *ὅθεν δὴ θέρους ἐκλάμποντος καὶ ἐπιδημοῦντος Ἀπόλλωνος θερινόν τι καὶ ἡ λύρα περὶ τὸν θεὸν ἁβρύνεται. ᾄδουσι μὲν ἀηδόνες αὐτῷ ὁποῖον εἰκὸς ᾖσαι παρ' Ἀλκαίῳ τὰς ὄρνιθας.*

space while wandering in foreign lands.[115] But who were these gods? The Scholiast to Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* explains that oracular deities were imagined as arriving and departing on a seasonal basis, and presents the validity of the oracles as corresponding directly to the presence of these divine commuters.[116] Conversely, the absence of these deities is held responsible for the potential falsehood of certain prophecies. Dio, on the other hand, thinks that the tutelary gods of a city were the ones that exhibited increased mobility, since they were bound to come back and forth revisiting their protégés and inspecting them at regular intervals, especially on festive occasions, which involved rich sacrificial meals.[117] None of these two views provides an all-inclusive answer to our question, but both clearly demonstrate an attempt to categorize, to pinpoint, and, effectively, to control conceptually these 'divine epidemics'.

Dionysus' and Kore's advent festivals

It is only to be expected that Dionysus, the epiphanic god par excellence of French structuralism, would have a plethora of advent festivals established all around the Greek-speaking world, since he is often imagined as 'coming' and 'leaving'.[118] It seems that there were two kinds of epiphanic festivals celebrated in honour of Dionysus: a) festivals that commemorated the seasonal advent of the god of wine in spring (like the Athenian Anthesteria) and b) festivals that commemorated the first arrival of the god and/or the first official introduction of his rites by one of his acolytes (like the Athenian Dionysia).[119] In the first category belong the majority of his *katagōgia* festivals. Festivals of that sort were celebrated in Miletus,[120] Ephesus,[121] Priene,[122] and, of course, in Athens.[123] But because Dionysus may arrive from the sea, *kataploi* festivals were also initiated in his honour, like the Smyrnean one mentioned by Aelius Aristides.[124] In Rhodes too they celebrated the two *kathodoi* of the god.[125]

In his seasonal arrival or departure, Dionysus is often accompanied by the Horai (as in the famous scene on the François vase)[126] or the Muses (in his

[115] Athen. *Deipn*. 4.138f. Olson (Athenaeus quotes here fr. 147 from Eupolis' *Helots*): in the Spartan feast of Kopis, which they shared with the god Apollo, the Spartans used to invite the strangers (*τοὺς ἐπιδημήσαντας τῶν ξένων*) who happened to be in the city at the time of the festival to dine along with the citizens.

[116] Schol. *ad* Call. *Hymn* 2.1.1 (Scholia in Hymnos (scholia vetera) (scholia *ψ* ex archetypo)): *<Οἷον>*: *ἀντὶ τοῦ οἵως, ὅπως. ἔστι δὲ θειασμός. λέγεται δὲ τῶν μαντευομένων θεῶν τὰ θεῖα καὶ ἐπιδημεῖν καὶ ἀποδημεῖν. καὶ ὅταν μὲν ἐπιδημῶσι, τὰς μαντείας ἀληθεῖς εἶναι· ὅταν δὲ ἀποδημῶσι, ψευδεῖς. ὡς γοῦν ἐπιδημοῦντος τοῦ θεοῦ ταῦτά φησιν ὁ Καλλίμαχος.*

[117] Dio *Or*. 33.47. According to the orator, Herakles and Perseus, the divine *οἰκήτορες* of Tarsus, paid regular visits to the city they jointly founded.

[118] Detienne (1986a, 13–14). On Dionysus as the archetypical epiphanic deity in the eyes of French structuralism and its advocates in Anglo-Saxon scholarship, see the Introduction.

[119] Larson (2007, 127–8) with further bibliographical suggestions.

[120] *LSAM* 48. [121] *I.Ephes*. III 661, 20. [122] *LSAM* 37 = *SIG* 1003.

[123] *IG* II/III2 1368= *SIG* 1109, 114. [124] Aristid. *Or*. 21.4 Keil.

[125] *ÖJH* 7, 1904, 92f. More on this topic in Burkert (1986).

[126] Schefold (1964, fig. 48a).

Agrionia festival as celebrated in Chaeronea).[127] The Horai, Nymphs, Charites, and Muses can be at times interchangeable divine pluralities associated with seasonal fertility, as we have already seen in chapter 4, and we can easily imagine them as closely linked with the seasonal joyous advent of the god of viticulture. In a charming hymn Dionysus is imagined as being absent for twelve months and brought back in spring by the Horai.[128] The majority of his *theoxenia* and *theodaisia* festivals (more on which in chapter 7), on the other hand, commemorated his original advent; that does not exclude, however, the possibility that some festivals might have contained combined features.

As already mentioned at the end of chapter 2, where we looked at possible cultic models for the Phye episode, *katagōgē, katagōgia*, and the corresponding *anagōgē, anagōgia* festivals were primarily celebrated in honour of Kore all around the Greek-speaking world. The arrival of the maiden goddess was often celebrated in the public aspect of her secret rites. Such was the case in Mantineia, where the Koragia festival included a procession, sacrifices, a peplos offered to the goddess (or rather her statue), and secret rites called *ἄρρητα μυστήρια* or *μυστήρια τὰ ἄρρητα*.[129] In the course of the public aspect of the festival, the statue of the goddess was removed from the temple and taken to the house of a certain individual (a priest or a priestess?) and then taken back to the temple, which remained open to the public for the day. Koragia means the 'coming up' of the Kore, or better the 'bringing up' of the Kore.[130] I wonder whether the emphasis in this case is not simply on the advent of the goddess, but also on the energetic involvement of the participants who invoke and thus epiphanize the deity—as opposed to more neutral terms like *anodos*, *epanodos*, *eisodos*, etc., which instead describe the arrival of the deity from his or her point of view.

An analogous festival was held in Laconian Helos, where according to Pausanias on certain days of the year a *xoanon* of Kore was brought up from the seaside city of Helos to the Eleusinion of Therai.[131] Our sources do not give any information as to what time of the year these festivals were held. In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (398–403), Persephone comes back from the underworld in springtime. A similar arrival of the Kore (*katagōgē* or *anodos*) may have been part of the sacred drama of Eleusis, as reconstructed by Mylonas followed by Clinton.[132] In the part of the Eleusinian sanctuary that is traditionally called Ploutonion and near the rock that has been identified as the Mirthless rock (*ἀγέλαστος πέτρα*)

[127] Apparently this festival was different from the one in Orchomenos, where (according to Plut. *Mor*. 299F) the priest of the god pursued with a sword the female members of the family that descended from the daughters of Minyas.

[128] Page *PMG* fr. 11b.

[129] *IG* V^2 265, 266 with Jost (2003, 145). On these secret rites, see Sourvinou-Inwood (2003a, 39).

[130] Cf. Hesych. s.v. *<κοραγεῖν>· τὸ ἀνάγειν τὴν Κόρην*.

[131] Paus. 3.20.7: *ἐκ τούτου δὴ τοῦ Ἕλους ξόανον Κόρης τῆς Δήμητρος ἐν ἡμέραις ῥηταῖς ἀνάγουσιν ἐς τὸ Ἐλευσίνιον*.

[132] Mylonas (1961, 148f.); Clinton (1992, 85–90, esp. 88 figs III, 10–12). Compare also Schol. Arist. *Equ*. 785a. Pictorial representations of *anodoi* are indeed tantalizing. In most of them a goddess (Kore?) is rising from the ground with her arms raised in a typical epiphanic gesture. The goddess is greeted on some of the vases by an ithyphallic Pan and Hermes (Bérard 1974, fig. 63), while on others she is greeted by satyrs and a figure identified as the Eleusinian Eubouleus (Clinton 1992, 72, fig. 42).

excavations unearthed an angled tunnel about four metres long and a metre wide that could have been used for the ritualized *anodos* of the Kore escorted by Eubouleus.[133] Mylonas imagined a priestess impersonating the maiden goddess ascending the stairway and emerging through the elliptical opening into the view of the spectators of the dromena in the sacred way. One has to admit, though, that suggestions of this sort can never rise above the level of speculation.

In Sicily, as reported by Diodorus, the advent festival of Kore was called Kore's *katagōgē* and was celebrated a bit later, 'round the time that the fruit of grain was just about to reach completion', that is around May.[134] During the festival both private and public sacrifices took place; the latter were far more expensive and spectacular than the former: every year they would sink bulls in lake Kyane, which sprang from the chasm on the ground that the lord of the underworld created when he snatched the maiden goddess. Perhaps the sacrificial victims were given to Hades in exchange for the goddess. Thus, in Sicily, Kore manifests her godhead in spring.

Diodorus presents the Sicilian festival held in honour of Demeter at sowing time in autumn as corresponding to one held for Kore: *τῆς μὲν γὰρ Κόρης τὴν καταγωγήν . . . τῆς δὲ Δήμητρος τὸν καιρὸν τῆς θυσίας*.[135] Passages like this have made many scholars believe that Kore's advent festivals in particular, and advent festivals of gods in general, were closely connected with the arrival of the four seasons of the year. Nilsson, for example, assumed that Kore's path to the underworld symbolizes the storage of the seed grain that in Mediterranean countries takes place in summer.[136] The disappearance of the seed grain in the summer months gives the impression of a dying agricultural life that is revived by the first autumn rains. It is at that time that Kore ascends to the upper world in the form of the stored seed grain that was brought up from the underground granaries. This interpretation has rightly been rejected on the basis that there is no sufficient evidence that the Greeks thought of these festivals in that way.[137] More importantly, festivals that celebrated a deity's 'journey up' or his/her 'journey down' were only loosely connected to seasonal change. Another piece of evidence that perhaps militates against a closer connection between advent festivals and the periods of the agricultural year is that such an identification is usually attributed to non-Greek people of the Near East such as the Egyptians and the Phrygians.[138]

[133] Paul Faure (*BCH* 82, 1958, 800–1) as quoted by P. Bonnechere (2003, 181).

[134] Diod. Sic. 5.4.4–5 and 4.23.4–5.

[135] On the cults of Demeter and Kore in Sicily see the papers collected and edited by Di Stefano (2008). Cf. also Orlandini (1968–9). More useful bibliography in Larson (2007, 65–84). I am grateful to Irene Calà for all the information on the cult of Demeter and Kore in Enna she shared with me.

[136] Nilsson (1955, 460ff.).

[137] More recently by Brumfield (1981, 211–16) and Burkert (1983, 261), among several others.

[138] See, for instance, Plut. *De Isid. et Osir*. 378e. Compare here also Xenophanes' criticism, as quoted in the same passage, of the Egyptians, who used to mourn for the seasonal destruction of the crops, as if they were dying gods. 'If the crops were gods,' said Xenophanes, 'then they should not mourn for them; now, if they mourn for their death, then that means that they are not real gods.'

Playing hide and seek with the divine

In other festivals a more paradoxical form of experiencing the divine occurs: the deity's presence is felt through its absence. In the course of the Tonaia, an advent festival initiated in honour of Hera of Samos, the goddess was imagined to disappear and then be found once more in the form of her cult statue.[139] The whole festival was based around the ritual re-enactment of the first disappearance of Hera's statue (*βρέτας*): the myth had it that some pirates from Tyros were instructed by the magistrate of Argos to steal the statue of the goddess, so as to incriminate their Argive princess who, while on the run from her homeland, had taken refuge in Samos and served as the priestess of the goddess. In the end, the pirates managed to steal the statue and take it to their ship, but the goddess did not allow them to sail their ship. Having attributed their bad luck to divine punishment, the pirates returned the statue to the beach and left some sacrificial cakes with it to propitiate the deity. In the meantime, the Samians arrived on the beach in their attempt to reclaim their goddess, and assuming that the statue had escaped on its own accord, they tied it with tree branches. Finally, the statue was released from its bonds, purified in the sea by its priestess Admete, and returned to its original base in the shrine sacred to the goddess. Ever since, in the annual festival that was initiated to commemorate the occasion, a mock-disappearance and recovery of the cult statue took place. The statue was transferred to the Samian seashore, purified, and then propitiated with sacrifices. Another example occurs in the Agrionia,[140] one of Dionysus' most well-known advent festivals, as discussed previously. The women of Chaeronea conduct a ritual search for the god 'as if he had run away' (*ὡς ἀποδεδρακότα ζητοῦσιν*); and then they give up and say that Dionysus has taken refuge with Muses. Similarly, in her annual Katagogia festival in Sicily, Kore comes back in the form of the mature crops of wheat in the early summer.[141]

Divine mobility as cultic residue of an older perception of the divine

What are we, then, to make of the divinities who demonstrate such an extraordinary mobility? Why are gods perceived as arriving at and departing from communal festive occasions? Some thoughts and possible interpretations have already been put forward, at least sporadically. We have seen, for instance, how the scholiast of Callimachus' hymn to Apollo thought that only oracular gods were imagined as 'arriving' and 'departing' in a cultic context; this narrow definition, however, could accommodate Demeter and Kore, as well as the Sicilian Aphrodite. The other quite popular interpretation of these festivals, as closely corresponding to the alternation of the seasons, accounts perhaps for spring

[139] Tonaia: Menodotus of Samos *FGrHist* 541 F2 = Athen. *Deipn*. 14.655b Olson. More information on the festival in Burkert (1997a, 24); Chaniotis (2002); Parker (2005, 195–6); and Larson (2007, 33).

[140] Plut. *Mor*. 716 f–717a.

[141] The festival is attested by Diod. Sic. 5.4.2–7, 4.23.4, and others. It took place 'when the fruit of grain was about to reach completion', i.e. sometime in May (?).

festivals such as the Sicilian Katagogia of Kore, or the Dionysian Agrionia in Chaeronea, but fails to account for a large number of other advent festivals, such as the Theophania in Delos, where the arrival of the deity is imagined as taking place in the middle of the summer.[142]

A more plausible reading of this curious phenomenon of divine mobility is to consider it as a cultic residue of an older perception of the divine presence: impressive and expensive cult statues and temple complexes are relatively recent developments in the religious life of the Greek polis. The first time we hear about them is in the eighth century BC. Temple complexes and monumental statues to some extent had the effect of rooting a divinity to a particular locale. Before that, the gods appear to be more flexible and mobile. This idea of divine mobility goes back to Mycenaean civilization, if we are to judge from the word *theophoria*, i.e. 'carrying the god(s)', as attested in the Knossos tablets, as well as from the scene of a divine statue carried in a processional context as depicted on the sarcophagus from Thebes.[143] In a unique two-phased vase from Knossos (dated *c.* the ninth century BC) a goddess endowed with wings is riding on a chariot. On one side, the departure of the deity is depicted, amidst a scene of blossoming nature, while on the other the same winged goddess arrives again riding on her chariot amidst a thriving nature setting.[144] Do these two images depict the arrival and the departure of a seasonal fertility deity as expressed in the symbolic language of cult? Can these two images depict the departure and the advent festivals of the same goddess of seasonal fertility in the form of her statuette?

Burkert certainly thinks so.[145] He discusses the whole phenomenon of advent festivals in the light of the concept of divine mobility. Advent festivals appear to be the cultic residues of this well-rooted belief in the notion that deities cannot be bound, cannot be pinned down. Nevertheless, they can be invoked, they can pay regular visits to humanity, and their benevolent visitation can be controlled by ritual means. In advent festivals, polis religion retains this early, deeply entrenched conception of divine mobility. Yet given the fact that such festivals now take place within a topographical landscape that binds the gods to a specific polis, this mobility could be seen as appropriated by cities to articulate their self-identity, as represented through the epichoric temples and sanctuaries in relation to which advent festivals are organized. Are we, then, to interpret advent festivals in particular, and, indeed epiphanic festivals in general, as an attempt to adjust old ways of thinking about, and dealing with, the divine to the new world order of the city state? Do they reflect, perhaps, a conscious attempt to appropriate these Panhellenic mobile deities and to enhance via ritual their local attachments? Or are they simply cultic expressions of the cross-culturally attested primeval human need to interact with its gods in a safe, ritually controlled environment? A provisional answer to such a complex question can be given after examining divine mobility in relation to sacrifice and *xenia* festivals.

[142] Burkert (1983, 260–2).
[143] Mylonas (1972, 152, fig. 14). Cf. also Hiller (1984, 139ff.).
[144] Coldstream (1984, 93–104); Burkert (1986, 82, figs 1–2).
[145] Burkert (1997a, 24–5).

SACRIFICE

As seen in chapter 2, at the heart of a great number of these festivals were a) sacrifice(s) performed in honour of the deity and often the subsequent communal ritual dining, and b) a joyous procession (quite often a chariot procession) transporting the visual symbol of the presence of the deity. The phrase *πομπή καὶ θυσία* (procession and sacrifice) becomes almost formulaic in later inscriptions.[146] By visual symbol of the presence of the deity I refer to any visual representation of the divine—from the god's figural cult statue to his or her aniconic representation—that within a specific cultural and festive context could be interpreted as denoting divine presence.[147] The chariot procession with the visual symbol of the divine parading in the streets of a village or a city, and thus rendering the whole community co-witnesses of the deity's arrival or departure and participants in the festive occasion, may precede or follow the sacrifice(s) offered to the deity.[148] A procession may be either centrifugal, that is directed from the centre of the community to the periphery, or centripetal, that is starting off from a peripheral cult centre and leading back to the centre of the polis.[149]

The Greek term *πομπή*, with the meaning of 'procession', is attested for the first time in Heraclitus.[150] Before that, it appears in the Homeric texts denoting the protective escorting of a human by a divine agent (cf. the divine escorting of Telemachus by Athena–Mentor in *Odyssey* 2 and 3; or the *pompē* of Priam by Hermes to the Achaean camp in *Iliad* 24) or by other humans (cf. the *pompē* given to Odysseus by Alcinous in *Odyssey* 6). In a festival context, the word *pompē* denotes the human escorting of the sacrificial victims to the altar. Compare here the formula *πέμπειν τὰ ἱερεῖα* found in a number of inscriptions.[151]

Sacrifice and the subsequent sacrificial meal appear to be a most prominent context for divine manifestations already in Homeric narratives.[152] In *Od.* 3.336, the phrase 'feast of the gods' (*δαίς θεῶν*) means 'sacrificial meal'. In the same book, Nestor is convinced that Athena partakes in his sacrificial meal: 'Quickly, my dear children, fulfil my desire, so that, first of all the gods, may I propitiate Athena, who came to me in manifest presence for the rich sacrificial feast of the god (*ἦ μοι*

[146] The term *thysia* can denote both 'sacrifice' and 'festival'. Compare here Plat. *Tim.* 26e, where *thysia* describes the festival of Panathenaea.

[147] On sacrifice, see Ekroth (2002), (2007), and (2008); Naiden (2013), and the essays in Hitch and Rutherford (2013). On aniconism, see Gaifmann (2012).

[148] Graf (1996, 58) underscores the importance of analogous spatial arrangements of the Panathenaic *pompē*.

[149] I find Graf's clear dualistic division between 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal' processions much more useful than other more complicated ones. I would like, though, to add an extra element of differentiation to his model by suggesting that a procession is never simply centripetal or simply centrifugal; in the majority of the cases, it is actually a combination of both. The centripetal Dionysiac procession (from Eleutherai to the city centre), for instance, presupposes a preceding centrifugal one, that is the preliminary procession that carries the statue of the god from the city centre to the small temple near the Academy. Likewise with his ephebic centrifugal procession to Eleusis: it presupposes and follows a centripetal procession, which accompanies the *hiera* from Eleusis to the Attic Eleusinion.

[150] *Vors.* 12, B5= Fr. 50 Marcovitch.

[151] See for instance, Robert, *Hell.* 11/12 (1960), 122ff. and Graf (1996, 57).

[152] On the integral role of sacrifice in the Homeric epic, see Hitch (2009, esp. 1–55).

ἐναργὴς ἦλθε θεοῦ ἐς δαῖτα θάλειαν).'[153] His conviction is confirmed by the omniscient narrator in lines 435–6: 'and Athena came to accept the sacrificial offerings (ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη | ἱρῶν ἀντιόωσα)'. As a parallel, we may recall what King Alcinous says to Odysseus about gods appearing undisguised when the Phaeacians perform their sacrifices.[154]

However, the Phaeacians belong in the same rank of extraordinary peoples as the Ethiopians and the Hyperboreans, who are often presented as dining in the company of the gods: at the very beginning of the *Odyssey*, for instance, Poseidon is absent from the assembly of the gods because he is away feasting with the Ethiopians, rejoicing in hecatombs of bulls and rams.[155] It is significant that the Ethiopians are marked from the beginning as exceptional people; they are called 'the furthermost of men' (ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν): they live on the outskirts of humanity. We are instantly reminded of the spatial *eschatiae* (mountains, rivers, sea, ocean, caves, etc.), these liminal landscapes that gods are so fond of (as demonstrated in chapter 3).[156] Yet again, we hear that gods are also fond of the people who live in these remote places isolated from the rest of humanity. In another narrative from the first book of *Iliad*, it is the whole divine assembly that is on vacation, abstaining from their administrative duties: 'They also left Olympus and went feasting with the Ethiopians,' says Thetis explaining to frustrated Achilles, 'but they shall come back in twelve days, and then I shall supplicate Zeus and persuade him to grant you your request.'[157]

The concept, then, of divine mobility, of divine presence and absence, as articulated in cultic terms in the advent festivals, is not new; in fact, it is as old as the Homeric texts and their background of religious ideas and practices.[158] One of the most amusing narratives of analogous character comes from *Iliad* 23, when Iris whilst paying a visit to the house of the wind gods, Boreas and Zephyr, very politely denies an invitation to dinner by underscoring that she has already made other plans: she is invited to the feast of the Ethiopians and needs to hurry if she wants her share of the glorious hecatombs.[159] Once more, the emphasis is on the remote character of the spatial arrangements of these peoples and their 'otherness'. These two characteristics, that of remoteness and otherness, are also attributed to the Phaeacians: the people of Scheria are also called ἔσχατοι, they again occupy a land encircled by the sea, isolated from the rest of the world, a land not often populated by humans, with the exception of the odd wandering traveller, as Nausicaa explains.[160]

It is no wonder then that the gods often share their dinner table with the Ethiopians and the Phaeacians; it is no wonder that they populate these remote,

[153] *Od.* 3.419–21. [154] *Od.* 7.199–206. [155] *Od.* 1.22–6.

[156] On the land of Phaeacians and Ethiopians as liminal landscapes see Segal (1962, 17–63) and (1967, 116, 321).

[157] *Il.* 1.423–7.

[158] The gods leave their watching post for twelve days. Divine mathematics naturally comes to mind: Aphrodite of Eryx, who leaves the place for nine days; Dionysus, who manifests himself to his female *thiasoi* every three years; and, of course, Apollo, who emigrates to the Hyperboreans for nine months, and has to be entreated to make his midsummer comeback to Delphi during his Theophania festival.

[159] *Il.* 23.205–7. [160] *Od.* 6.203–5.

Fig. 6.4. Attic black-figured amphora from the Altes Museum, Berlin (Inv. F. 1686) attributed to the Berlin Painter; dated to 550–540 BC. The priestess of Athena stands in front of the sacrificial altar. The statue of Athena stands at the far right facing its worshippers.

mythical landscapes of unending revelling and interminable sacrificial feasting. These peoples along with the Cyclops and the Giants are far from being human; they occupy, as Segal has shown, an interstitial place between mortals and immortals; they represent legendary survivals of a pre-sacrificial societal division between humans and gods. They are the reminder of a distant mythical time when

mortals and immortals used to dine together.[161] These shared dinner tables were, however, irrevocably separated from those of the immortals, ever since Prometheus tried to deceive Zeus by an unfair arrangement of the sacrificial meat during a communal sacrificial feast at Mecone.[162] Henceforth, only very privileged people like the Hyperboreans would enjoy moments of conviviality and extreme proximity with gods and heroes.[163]

Thus, a sacrifice and a perverted sacrificial feast were held responsible for the separation of the races of mortal men and gods.[164] Paradoxical though it may sound, sacrifice not only divides the mortal and the immortal spheres, but it unites them as well.[165] In fact, it becomes the primary means of communication between these two worlds that are bound together by interdependence, as lines 310–13 of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* show: the famine that ravages the crops of the humans simultaneously deprives the immortals of their *timai*.[166] The gods were thought to judge the piety and the devoutness of men from the amount of smoke produced by the burnt thighbones of the sacrificial animals.[167]

Most importantly, the sacrificial procession (Fig. 6.4) and the subsequent sacrificial feast became one of the most pertinent contexts for divine manifestations. Two examples will illustrate this further: the first comes from besieged Cyzicus,[168] where during the festival of Phersephattia (in honour of Phersephatta, i.e. Persephone) the people, lacking a black heifer for the sacrifice, fashioned one of dough, and brought it to the altar. Now the sacred heifer reared for the goddess was pasturing, like the other herds of the Cyzicenians, on the mainland opposite, but on that day she left the herd, swam over alone to the city, and presented herself to the sacrificial altar! The second example comes from Carian Stratonikeia, where during the Panamareia festival (identified and discussed above as one of the epiphanic festivals) Zeus Panamaros manifested his godhead (*ἐ[πι]- | διξαμένου τοῦ θεοῦ ἐνεργίαν φαν[ε]- | ρωτάτην*) by leading an ox to volunteer for sacrifice. In particular, the ox was said to have approached the priest Diomedes the Second and led him to the 'bouleuterion'. The animal then offer itself to be sacrificed in honour of the god.[169] Moreover, a sacrifice may follow a divine manifestation.

[161] Hes. Fr. 1.1–20 M-W (= *P.Oxy.* XXIII.2354) and Paus. 8.2.4–5.

[162] Hes. *Th.* 540ff.; *Op.* 53ff.; Pind. *Ol.* 1.36ff.; for an analogous story of anthropophagic perversion of sacrificial ritual see Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 9.78 and Paus. 8.2.3.

[163] Cf. Pind. *Pyth.* 10.28–37 Snell & Maehler.

[164] Who, nevertheless, have common origins: Hes. *Op.* 108.

[165] In short, sacrifice is taken as both uniting and dividing the mortal and the immortal spheres and to an extent the human and animal (Osborne 1987, 182), as well as the divine and animal ones; compare here the anthropophagic gods in the Tantalos and Lycaon narratives, and the interstitial race of Cyclopes that oscillates between the divine and the animal spheres. Parker (2011, 127–43) offers an eloquent exposition of both the primary sources and the scholarly trends that supported the idea of sacrifice as a channel of communication between man and god. In the same section, rites of *theoxenia* are also discussed.

[166] With Clay (1989, 248ff.).

[167] *Il.* 4.45–9 with Osborne (1987, 174).

[168] Plut. *Luc.* 10.1–4. On this episode, see also chapter 2, 'Siege epiphanies'.

[169] *I.Stratonikeia* 266,15–17 Şahin; dedication by [Dio]medes Sosandros Hie(rokometes) and Tatias [Am]mion Apphion, hiereis; 22/3; found at Panamara. Cf. Roussel (1931, 98); Cousin (1904), *BCH* 28, 20–2, no. 1.B; and Laumonier (1937) *BCH* 61, 284, no. 117. Naiden (2007, esp. 68–70) contains a critique, albeit not wholly convincing, of literary and iconographical sources which support the widespread idea among modern scholars that sacrificial victims were meant to approach willingly

In this case, the mortals reciprocate for the honour of witnessing an epiphany. Compare here Nestor's excitement at being an eyewitness to Athena's departure in the form of a sea eagle;[170] or the eagerness with which Zeus' priest at Lystra put together laborious bull sacrifices to reciprocate for Zeus' (aka Paul) and Hermes' (aka Barnabas) epiphany.[171]

Whilst in Homer gods attended their sacrificial feast in anthropomorphic or perhaps even zoomorphic form, in the everyday cultic reality the divine manifested its presence in the form of its cult statue (*effigies* epiphany). Such a scene is depicted on one side of the Attic black-figure amphora in Fig. 6.4: a girl-like priestess with branches in her hands leads a sacrificial procession to the altar. She is followed by three men (one bearded and two young ones) and a bull which is to be sacrificed on the altar. On the other side of the vessel, two kithara players and one aulos player are also seen in procession. The bull lowers its head to signify its consent to the sacrifice—just like the sacrificial animals in Cyzicus and Stratonikeia. Athena, the recipient of the sacrifice, stands behind the altar. Athena is present in the course of the sacrifice just as she was in book 3 of the *Odyssey*, only in this case she is present not in an anthropomorphic guise, but in the form of her cult statue. In fact, she is depicted as Promachos, the Athenian tutelary warrior, with helmet, spear, and shield, resembling the Promachos type as we know it from the small-scale bronzes of the Acropolis. Athena's large size and her static posture imply that this is not the goddess in person, but her cult statue. It is in this form as an *effigies* that the goddess gladly accepts the sacrificial animal.[172]

Synopsis

To pull all the threads together, this section has demonstrated that divine mobility is clearly attested in the Homeric texts, and that sacrifice was one of the most pertinent contexts of divine revelation attested in our sources from Homer to the Acts of Apostles. The gods move and, because they do so, they are absent from mortals' lives for most of the time. Crisis and cult bring the gods into contact with human communities and force them to engage actively with human affairs. It was during the ritual act of a sacrifice and a sacrificial meal of mythical times that the final demarcation between mortals and immortals was drawn; and yet, in the post-Promethean era, sacrifice becomes for humans the primary means of communicating with the divine. In a sense, sacrificing to the gods becomes an essential way of pinning them down and making them listen to one's requests. As expected,

the sacrifical altar. Epigraphical sources, however, like the one discussed here, do not necessarily support this view.

[170] *Od.* 3.371ff.

[171] *Acts* 14.11–13: *οἵ τε ὄχλοι ἰδόντες ὃ ἐποίησεν Παῦλος ἐπῆραν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν Λυκαονιστὶ λέγοντες, Οἱ θεοὶ ὁμοιωθέντες ἀνθρώποις κατέβησαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς·* 12 *ἐκάλουν τε τὸν Βαρναβᾶν Δία, τὸν δὲ Παῦλον Ἑρμῆν, ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ ἡγούμενος τοῦ λόγου.* 13 *ὅ τε ἱερεὺς τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ ὄντος πρὸ τῆς πόλεως ταύρους καὶ στέμματα ἐπὶ τοὺς πυλῶνας ἐνέγκας σὺν τοῖς ὄχλοις ἤθελεν θύειν.* An informative discussion of the conceptual and literary background of the narrative can be found in Palmer (1987, 427–38) and Bremmer (1998, 10–11).

[172] More on this scene in Backe-Dahmen, Kästner, and Schwarzmaier (2010, 105, fig. 53).

sacrifice and its related ritual actions (sacrificial procession and feast) is also one of the main foci in a large number of epiphanic festivals, where a divine manifestation is celebrated and often re-enacted. Nowhere, however, are sacrifice and the subsequent sacrificial feast more fundamental than in the cultic context of the *theoxenia* festivals, an issue which the next chapter explores further.[173]

[173] On the close, symbiotic relationship between *thysia* and *theoxenia* rituals see Ekroth (2008, 102–4).

7

Theoxenia festivals

Playing host and guest with the divine

<θεοξένια>· κοινὴ ἑορτὴ πᾶσιν τοῖς θεοῖς . . .
Theoxenia: a festival common to all deities

Hesychii Alexandrini lexicon θ 286

A typical theoxenic episode involves a mortal receiving a divine guest, often in disguise; the mortal, being unaware of the divine identity of his guest, either offers or refuses to offer hospitality and receives reward or punishment accordingly. We can then distinguish between successful theoxenies, which often form the *aition* for the establishment of cults, and unsuccessful ones, where occasionally the deity's first advent on a terrestrial level is frustrated by a mortal and the punishment of the perpetrator follows.[1] In a number of these narratives, the human who has successfully entertained a deity appears to have acquired a cult status and a place in the official sacrificial calendar of the city.

One tradition, for example, has Sophocles providing *xenia* to Asclepius in own house, before the god acquired his own temple, and so receiving heroic status and the cultic title *dexiōn*, i.e. the one who receives, who provides entertainment to the divine guest.[2] The host of a new deity is responsible for the dissemination and the propagation of the new cult. The hospitable host may also be celebrated as a culture bringer, that is a semi-divine or divine figure who in the collective memory of a community is believed to have been responsible for the introduction and the distribution of new techniques of cultivation of the earth (such as those of viticulture and agriculture). The human culture bringers receive instructions from the visiting divine ones. Famous divine culture bringers of Panhellenic radiance were Dionysus and Demeter, the inventors of viniculture and agriculture respectively; Herakles, who founded the Olympic games; and Prometheus, who in the Greek mind was the hero who invented politics, logic, architecture, meteorology, etc., that is all the *technai* that are mentioned in *Prometheus Bound* 436–506. Other culture bringers were more or less bound to a locale. This was,

[1] Cf. *ODCMR* s.v. *theoxenia*, where the terms 'successful' and 'failed' *theoxenia* are used.

[2] More on this in chapter 3, 'Asclepius the divine healer, Aslepius the divine physician'. See also Plut. *Non posse* 22, 1103, who marks clearly the *theoxenia* as an *epiphaneia*. Cf. also Weniger (1923–4, 16–57).

for instance, the case with Icarius and Triptolemos, who were closely associated with viniculture and agriculture in Attica.

The terms *theoxenia*, *xenia*, *xenismos*, *xenika*, and other related terms are attested in our sources only in relation to cult.[3] To be sure, the Greeks used the term more sparingly than modern scholars do. The term *theoxenia* (*τὰ θεοξένια*), for instance, is attested only in relation to festivals held in honour of Apollo (Delphi and Pellene) and the Dioscuri (Akragas, Paros, Keos, Tenos, Chios, etc.). According to the scholiast on Pindar's third *Olympian Ode*, public festivals were held by the Greeks on certain days, when the gods were thought of as being present (*ἐπιδημούντων*) in the city.[4] The related festivals of *theodaisia* (meaning 'sharing meat portions with the god') and *Dionysia xenia* or *Dionysia ta xenika* are attested only for Dionysus.[5] In addition, the same rationale of ritualized hospitality offered to the divine underlies the rites of *deipnophoria*, which were slightly different from the *theoxenia* rites in that the recipients of these *deipna* were exclusively female deities (such as the Cecropidae and Athena Skiras).[6] In an attempt to avoid confusion and simultaneously underline the common cultural metaphor behind these rites, I use the term *theoxenia* to refer to all the forms of ritualized hospitality offered to deities on behalf of an individual, or city, or from a god to certain privileged individuals, thus aligning myself with the prevalent current in scholarship. Strictly speaking, however, the more general term *xenia* (*τὰ ξένια*, *ἡ ξενία*) would perhaps be more accurate.

We have already mentioned briefly (in chapter 4) some of the most famous of these festivals: the *theoxenia* festival at Delphi, where Apollo was thought to offer hospitality to gods and heroes,[7] among whom Pindar, the *theophilēs* poet, was thought to dine along with the god in his temple, or so the priest of the god proclaimed each day, when he was closing the doors of the temple.[8] Polemon, the *periēgētēs*, in his discussion of the same festival mentions a most peculiar detail: the sacred laws of Delphi allowed the man who would bring the largest onion for

[3] On *theoxenia* see Pfister (1924, 302–3) and Nock (1972, vol. 2, 585ff.). Gernet (1981, 32ff.) and Bruit (1989) provide good discussions. On the religious significance of these festivals and their meaning see Motte (2003). Jameson (1999) provides an informative discussion with rich documentation esp. of the epigraphic sources, on which see also Ekroth (2002, 135–9, 177–8, 276–86, and 303). More general treatises on the matter, with extra emphasis on the cultural context of ritualized friendship and hospitality, are those of Schmitt-Pantel (1990, 14–33) and Herman (1987). Cf. also Bruit Zaidman's article in *ThesCRA* II, 225–9, Veyne (2000), and Parker (2011, 142–4). A parallel ritual partly influenced by the Greek custom is the Roman *lectisternium* ritual, where the deity is imagined as partaking in a symposium while reclining on his/her sacred couch. See more on that in Ogilvie (1965, 655), who thought that images of the gods were always brought out and placed on the sacred couches during these festivities; and Leigh (2002).

[4] Schol. *ad* Pind. *Ol.* 3.24 Drachmann: A <*Θεοξένια.*> *θεοξενίων ἑορταὶ παρ' Ἕλλησιν οὕτως ἐπιτελοῦνται κατά τινας ὡρισμένας ἡμέρας, ὡς αὐτῶν τῶν θεῶν ἐπιδημούντων ταῖς πόλεσιν. ἄγοντος δὲ Θήρωνος τὴν ἑορτὴν τῶν Διοσκούρων καὶ Ἑλένης ἠγγέλθη ἡ νίκη· διὸ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἄρχεται.*

[5] Jameson (1999, 36, n. 5). On Dionysus' *xenismos*, see Sourvinou-Inwood (2003b, 85–6).

[6] Simon, (1983, 68). Jameson (1999, 38) rightly notes that the emphasis here was on the bringing of the food to these deities rather than receiving them as guests and entertaining them.

[7] Scholia *ad* Pindar, *Nem.* 7.68 Drachmann: *γίνεται ἐν Δελφοῖς ἥρωσι ξένια, ἐν οἷς δοκεῖ ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ ξένια καλεῖν τοὺς ἥρωας. εἶναι οὖν μόρσιμον ἐν ταῖς πομπαῖς ταῖς ἡρωΐαις καὶ ταῖς πανηγύρεσιν, ἐν αἷς ἐκήρυσσον τοὺς ἥρωας, θυσίαις ταῖς πολυθύτοις ἐπισκοπεῖν μετὰ Θέμιδος καὶ τὰ νομίμως γινόμενα αὐτοῖς ξένια ἐφορῶντα.* On Delphic *theoxenia* see also Rutherford (2001c, 310–11).

[8] Pindar, *Vita Ambros.* 15–20 Drachmann.

Leto to share the table of the god.[9] Apollo shared tables of conviviality with yet another master of poetry in Argos, where, according to Aelian, the citizens, having performed sacrifices, used to invite both the god and their favourite poet Homer to dine along with them: *ποιοῦντες δὲ θυσίαν, ἐπὶ ξένια ἐκάλουν τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα καὶ Ὅμηρον*.[10] Some form of cult meal was one of the primary features of Greek religious festivities: meat was either devoted to or presided over by the gods.[11] The unique feature in these theoxenic festivals is that the meal is commonly shared between the gods and the worshippers, thus contrasting with ordinary sacrificial procedure, where the human portions are set apart from the divine ones, the latter usually being burned on the altar.[12]

The practice of sharing the same dining table and seats with the divine has been attested in literary and epigraphical sources continuously from pre-Classical to Hellenistic and Roman periods.[13] Dining halls and cult tables have been excavated within sacred precincts. A wide range of deities are associated with theoxenic rites: Apollo, Dionysus, Zeus with the cult epithets of Soter, Philios, Xenios, and Epiteleios, Athena Soteira and Skiras, the twelve gods, the Great Mother and Attis, Plouton, Asclepius, Dioscuri, Herakles, and the Anatolian Men.[14] The underlying idea behind both the cultic activities and the mythic narratives is that of communal feasting. Let us not forget that the feature of ritual communal dining with the divine was also prominent in a great number of mystery cults (e.g. that of Demeter in Eleusis, that of Kore and Demeter at Corinth, the mystery cult of Zeus Panamaros in Hellenistic Caria, etc.).[15]

[9] Athen. *Deipn*. 9.372a Olson. The ritual was instituted in honour of Leto, who craved an onion while pregnant with Apollo.

[10] Ael. *VH* 9.15. [11] Kane (1975, 321).

[12] Cf. Ekroth (2002, 282). Note, however, some important caveats set by Parker (2011, 143–4): 'Neither at sacrifice nor even at theoxenia rituals, it is true, did the Greeks claim to be recovering the primeval table fellowship of man and god: in theoxenia, mortals might dine under the same roof as the god, but the god had his own table and there was no attempt to localize precisely the whereabouts of the god who "came" to "receive" sacrifices. The difference in nature between man and god was irreducible; these rituals, however, did what they could.'

[13] Historians of religion have rightly read an early manifestation of these elaborate rituals of mortal–immortal table fellowship in Eumaeus' preparing a sacrificial feast in honour of Odysseus (*Od*. 14.434ff.), where the swineherd offers portions of the meat to Hermes and the Nymphs. Cf. Kearns (1982).

[14] Jameson (1999, 54) with detailed bibliographical references.

[15] Eleusis: *LIMC* III,2, p. 465, fig. 111 with Jameson (1999, 46, n. 39); Demeter and Kore in Corinth: more on that in Bookides (1990); Zeus Panamaros: Roussel (1927, 123–37). Sourvinou-Inwood (1994) argued compellingly that a passage from Philostratus (Philostr. *VS* 249) provides evidence for a cultic meal of analogous nature, which must have taken place in the preliminary stage of the festival of City Dionysia, the festival which aimed primarily at celebrating the first introduction and the ritual reception of the god by his Attic host Ikarios. The reference is to Herodes Atticus, who 'whenever the festival of Dionysus came around and the image of the god descended to the Academy, he would furnish wine to drink for citizens and strangers alike, as they lay in the Kerameikos on couches of ivy leaves'. In this view, Philostratus reports here one of the benefactions of Herodus Atticus that must have taken place in accordance with the pre-established ritual pattern of a ritual *xenismos* of Dionysus. This suggestion can be further supported by evidence of similar theoxenic meals that were offered for citizens and foreigners alike, like the theoxenic meal of the Kopis festival, which was organized in Sparta in honour of Apollo. According to Athenaeus (*Deipn*. 4.138f. Olson), the Spartans used to invite any strangers who happened to be in the city at the time of the festival to dine along with the citizens and share the cultic meal with the god. What is important for our discussion is that Sourvinou's main

The Greeks imagined that they could entertain their gods the same way they entertained their guests.[16] This statement can be further supported by the kind of technical language they used. Formulae like *κλίνην στρῶσαι καὶ τράπεζαν κοσμῆσαι* set the feasting table (*trapeza*) at the centre of these festivities.[17] The spreading of the clothing over dining couches, or simply setting the table (*στρῶσις τῆς κλίνης*, *κόσμησις*, *ἐπικόσμησις τῆς τραπέζης*), or even the table itself, can be equated with the ritual of *theoxenia*.[18] These tables often stood in front of the cult statue of the gods. It is exactly the ritual of spreading luxurious covers on both the couches and the tables and placing portions of cooked meat, sweetmeat, cakes, fruits, and vegetables on the top for the divine that singles out these rites from the portions of uncooked meat placed on the altars of the gods or the portions of meat burnt through upon them.

In the joint cult of Apollo and Asclepius at Erythrae (early fourth century BC), for example, each of the two gods received the same portions (*τρία κρέα*) from the animal that was sacrificed, regardless of whether the sacrifice was initially prescribed in honour of Apollo or Asclepius. The two deities received in addition to the meat the entrails (*σπλάχνα*) of the sacrificial victim. Jameson rightly remarks that consumption of the entrails, the first piece of the animal body roasted over the sacrificial pyre, 'was the clearest demonstration of fellowship among the sacrificers'. More significantly, they often placed these *splachna* in the hands or on the knees of the honoured deities, undoubtedly in an attempt to create strong bonds of table fellowship with their divine guests.[19]

The divine guest was present either in an *effigies* form, as seen above, or in a *pars pro toto* form, as in the divine banquet that was prepared in honour of Ajax in

hypothesis that Dionysus' *xenismos* is central to the festival of City Dionysia can be safely accepted even if one is not in agreement with all the further particulars. Surely, it is fair to assume that the ritual *xenismos* of the statue of the god was the festival's key feature, especially since the *eisagōgē* of the statue constituted its preliminary rite. Moreover, it is reasonable enough to assume that the ritual reception of the god and perhaps the cultic meal in his honour would have taken place in the Prytaneion at an earlier phase of the development of the festival, especially in view of the ritual *xenismos* of the Dioscuri, which also took place in the Prytaneion, the heart of the thriving polis, where the city's benefactors and honorands were allowed to eat for free. On a cultic level, then, Dionysus is ritually received and entertained by the whole city of democratic Athens, who acts here as a collective household. This image of en masse democratic reception of the god by the whole community is in sharp contrast to the so-called 'introduction myths' of the god, which are situated—at least in the earliest of our narratives—within very early political formations such as the monarchy in Athens, and the rule of the Minyae in Orchomenos, that of the Proitides and the Perseides at Argos, and, of course, the Cadmeian rule at Thebes, and so on. This dissonance between aristocratic households receiving the god in myth and the god's democratic reception by the polis as a collective household can be read either as a strong indication of the antiquity of Dionysus' cult, or as evidence of a pre-existing tension between the aristocratic *oikos* and the democratic polis, as two agents in constant effort to appropriate this special bond of ritualized friendship and conviviality with the divine.

[16] Parker (2011, 143–4): 'theoxenia goes a step further in make-believe assimilation of the god to a human guest'.

[17] Pind. *Ol.* 3.18–19 and Scholia ad loc. with Bruit (1989, 19) and Ziehen s.v. *παράσιτοι* in *RE*. See also Gill (1974, 117–37) and Detienne and Vernant (1979, 37–132).

[18] Pollux 6.83–84 with Jameson (1999, 40).

[19] See for instance the following inscriptions from Chios: *LSS* 76–8; 129; and *LSCG* 119–21. This custom of placing *splachna* on the knees or hands of the statues, by no means confined to Chios, is discussed by Durand (1989, 92–100).

Athens, where the hero was represented by his armour which was placed on the sacred couch.[20] In Chaeronea, it was Agamemnon's sceptre, commonly known as 'the Shaft' (*σκῆπτρον*), that received sacrifices every single day and along with them 'a table full of every sort of meat and sweetmeat'.[21] In the course of the theoxenic festival in honour of Zeus Sosipolis and the twelve gods at Hellenistic Magnesia on the Maeander, a bull, a female goat, and a male goat were sacrificed in honour of Zeus, Artemis Leukophryene, and Apollo Pythios respectively; three of the most impressive dining couches, corresponding to the number of the animals, are to be spread by the *stephanephoros*; the same official was responsible for garlanding the statues of the twelve gods, who were imagined as guests of honour attending the festival dressed in their most beautiful clothes.[22] Herakles was also present in the form of his garlanded statue along with other gods, whose statues stood garlanded near the couch (*στρώμνη*) that was set up for Herakles' *xenismos* on the island of Kos.[23]

By invoking the divine to come and share their dining couches and tables, the Greeks established table fellowship with their tutelary deities, while simultaneously they cemented the bonds of friendship and conviviality with one another.[24] Social and political anthropology has underlined: a) the polysemy of sacred feasting, which is aimed at both the divine agents and the fellow human beings;[25] and b) the importance of communal ritualized dining as a cross-cultural mechanism of social marginalization and reaggregation into a wider community.[26] More significantly, socio-anthropological and socio-ethnographic field surveys, like that of Keating in Pohnpei (Micronesia), have established that social actors use a wide range of semiotic modes to organize and interpret social relations, to define notions of superior and inferior, and, effectively, construct social

[20] Scholia *ad* Pindar *N.* 2.19 Drachmann: *ἴσως δὲ, ὅτι διὰ τιμῆς ἦγον οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τὸν Αἴαντα, ὡς μὴ μόνον φυλὴν Αἰαντίδα ἀποδεῖξαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ κλίνην αὐτῷ μετὰ πανοπλίας κοσμεῖν κτλ.*

[21] Paus. 9.40.11–12. Notwithstanding the fact that this sceptre, in all probability a genuine Mycenaean relic, received full cultic honour and worship comparable to those received by divinities, it had no temple of its own; instead, it was kept in the house of him who served annually as its priest.

[22] *LSAM* 32 with Jameson (1999, 41–2).

[23] *LSAM* 177, with Jameson (1999, 42–3). The *xenia* festival at Kos was privately founded by a certain Diomedon and it was performed jointly in honour of Herakles and Diomedon's family; the latter in the form of their images (*eikones*) were also present along with the god's statue in the *theoxenion* rite. Surprisingly enough, we are told that a combined celebration of Herakles' *xenismos* and private functions such as weddings could be celebrated simultaneously in the same place. In such a case, we can assume Herakles would be perceived as the guest of honour in the wedding.

[24] Cf. also Dietler (2001, 47): 'The older Durkheimian functionalist view or ritual as an adaptive mechanism (a kind of all-purpose adhesive substance) for the maintenance of social solidarity (or "system equilibrium," in the terminology of one of the more archaeologically popular versions of functionalism) is also now generally recognized to be a partial and flawed understanding. This is not to deny or ignore that rituals frequently serve to create and reproduce a sense of communitas (Turner 1969, Van Gennep 1960). But anthropological understanding of the symbolic work of ritual has moved well beyond this feature, and attention has now turned to the historically instrumental role of ritual in creating, defining, and transforming structures of power.' On eating and commensality as illuminating societal processes such as political-economic value creation and symbolic value creation see Mintz (1985), Munn (1986), and Mintz and Du Bois (2002). I am indebted to Janine Su for her help with the aforementioned bibliographical references.

[25] Dietler (2001, 56).

[26] See, for instance, Gernet (1981) and Kertzer (1988).

hierarchy.[27] Besides the most obvious sign systems like that of language, societies employ spatial relations and food sharing to organize and interpret social relations. Examining the ways feasting practices are developed in a society helps us understand better what Dietler calls 'the micropolitics of everyday life'.

Feasting, and communal feasting in particular, is intrinsically political.[28] Both private and public *xenia* feasts provide an arena for highly condensed symbolic representation and manipulation of social relationships. Theoxenic rites are of great importance for the purposes of this study of divine epiphany in Greek culture, precisely because, like other forms of epiphany, they are employed by individuals and the community to reproduce or to transform relations of power and, effectively, to cement or to challenge social stratification. In the ensuing sections I discuss briefly some of the most well-known theoxenies of both myth and cult in an attempt to foreground the epiphanic gods and goddesses who were most commonly invited to share the tables of the humans, as well as the political and social implications of these communal feasts with the divine for both the individual and the community.

TWIN GUESTS AND HERAKLEAN FEASTS

The rite of *theoxenia* seems particularly characteristic of the cult of the Dioscuri, for whom *theoxenia* festivals were celebrated not only in the Peloponnese and in Dorian-speaking areas, but also in Attica, Chios, and Paros.[29] In Athens, the sacred tables in honour of the Dioscuri were set out in the Prytaneion, the heart of the thriving polis, where the city's benefactors and honorands were allowed to eat for free.[30] It was there that the Athenians offered the twin gods cheese, barley

[27] Keating (2000).

[28] On how anthropological surveys of feasting can offer us a fertile insight into the ways social relations and processes were organized and negotiated in ancient societies, see Dietler (2001, 66–114) with more bibliography. Dietler (2001, 65–114) distinguishes between 'empowering feasts' (which involve 'the manipulation of commensal hospitality toward the acquisition and maintenance of certain forms of symbolic capital, and sometimes economic capital as well'); 'patron-role feasts' (which involve 'the formalised use of commensal hospitality to symbolically reiterate and legitimise institutionalised relation of asymmetrical social power'; and, finally, 'diactritical feasts' (which involve 'the use of differentiated cuisine and styles of consumption as a diacritical symbolic device to naturalise and reify concepts of ranked differences in the status of social orders or classes'). More on these categories in the Introduction in Wecowski (2014). Since feasting with the divine was implemented both by imaging the gods as hosts and guests to human banquets, I would be inclined to think of the feasts involving the elite and the gods as guests are more of the 'empowering' sort, while those involving the gods as hosts are more of the 'patron role' kind.

[29] *ODCMR* s.v. *theoxenia*. On Dioscuri and their particular interest in theoxenic rites see Silver (1992, 104–5) and, more recently, Parker (2011, 143–4), who rightly calls the twin guests 'the commonest recipients of *theoxenia*'. Cf. also Platt (forthcoming). For some of the most well-known iconographical representations of the twin gods receiving *theoxenia* see, for instance, *APV*^{2} 1049, no. 53; *LIMC* III 577, *Dioscuri* no. 115.

[30] Cf. Wilkins (2000, 89): 'The gods in the polis were imagined to eat to eat the same foods as humans at *theoxeniai*; this is picked up by the comedy and extended, so that on some comic occasions the gods eat the same foods as humans, while on others they subsist on the smoke of the sacrificial offerings.' Wilkins is thinking here of Chionides fr. 7 (on which see n. 31 below), but on p. 100 he

cake, ripe olives, and leeks, thus reminding themselves of an earlier, simpler way of life.[31] Thus in Athens it was the whole of the citizenry collectively who partook in the benefits of conviviality with the gods. But that was not always the case. More often than not certain members of the sociopolitical elite claimed for themselves and the members of their families the power and the prestige that came along with offering hospitality to the gods.

In Acragas and under the patronage of the Emmenidae (Theron's clan), the theoxenic festival in honour of the same twin gods and the corresponding feast seemed to have been far more luxurious.[32] According to the ancient Scholia, the third *Olympian Ode* was performed during the Theoxenia festival of Acragas celebrating Theron's chariot race in 476 BC.[33] The announcement of the victory coincided with the moment that Theron invited the twin gods to join him in the sacrificial feast.[34] The main line of thought goes as follows: after his apotheosis Herakles entrusted supervision of the Olympian games to the Tyndaridai, and it is because of Theron and his family's devoted entertainment of these heroes that they won such honour in the games (lines 34–41). One cannot help admiring Pindar's ways of entangling mythic narrative (Herakles the founder of the games entrusts them to Dioscuri) and cultic realities (Theron shares his feast with the gods by formally invoking them while he performs the sacrifice) and blurring the demarcation line between them.

Pindar uses the same device once again in his tenth *Nemean Ode*.[35] It is no wonder that Theaios of Argos won the wrestling match, since the Dioscuri had visited and feasted along with Pamphaes, one of Theaios' glorious ancestors: *Κάστορος δ' ἐλθόντος ἐπὶ ξενίαν πὰρ Παμφάη καὶ κασιγνήτου Πολυδεύκεος, οὐ θαῦμα σφίσιν ἐγγενὲς ἔμμεν ἀεθληταῖς ἀγαθοῖσιν*. In both cases, that of Theron and Theaios, their genos was blessed and had, in a sense, secured eternal blessings by providing meals to the Dioscuri. It was a great honour, indeed, for a household to entertain divine guests.[36] Other mortals, like Euphorion, once they

reminds us also that in the final scene of the Birds (1601–2), Peisetaerus offers to make peace with the gods by inviting the ambassadors to an *ariston*. On the Prytaneion as the symbolic centre of the polis, see Sourvinou-Inwood (1994, 279).

[31] Chionides fr. 7 K-A = Athen. *Deipn*. 4.137e Olson: *ὁ δὲ τοὺς εἰς Χιωνίδην ἀναφερομένους Πτωχοὺς ποιήσας τοὺς Ἀθηναίους φησίν, ὅταν τοῖς Διοσκούροις ἐν πρυτανείῳ ἄριστον προτιθῶνται, ἐπὶ τῶν τραπεζῶν τιθέναι τυρὸν καὶ φυστὴν δρυπεπεῖς τ' ἐλάας καὶ πράσα, ὑπόμνησιν ποιουμένους τῆς ἀρχαίας ἀγωγῆς*. On this and other passages, which lay emphasis on the thrifty lifestyle and diet of the ancestors, see Kearns (2012).

[32] Pind. *Ol*. 3.38–41: (trans. Race) 'And so, I believe, my heart | bids me affirm that to the Emmenidai | and glory has come as a gift | from Tyndareos' horsemen sons, because of all mortals | they attend them with most numerous feasts of welcome | as with pious minds they preserve the rites of the blessed gods.' See also Schol. Pind. *Ol*. 3.1a: *τοὺς θεοὺς τούτους σφόδρα ἐν Ἀκράγαντί φησι τιμᾶσθαι*.

[33] See Verdenius (1987, 4–39); Robbins (1982); Shelmerdine (1987); and Morrison (2007, 84–9).

[34] But this is probably a theory that simply derives from the poem itself, since there is no other authority to support it. On *theoxenia* festivals in Pindar, see Aubriot (2003, 73–9), Thomas (2007), and Morgan (2003, 228–9); on *theoxenia* in Pindar's paeans, see Rutherford (2001c, 310–11) where there is more information on the Delphic *theoxenia* festival.

[35] Pind. *Nem*. 10.50–2 Maehler.

[36] Miraculous healing could also take place in the course of these shared meals with the divine, such as was the case of a soldier from Kroton, who was cured from his grave wounds at the house of a Spartan who was entertaining the twin gods, according to Theopompus of Chios (*FGrHist* 115 F 292).

experienced the divine gift of hospitality, refused to close the doors of their house ever again.[37]

Other narratives, like the one that relates the punishment of the Spartan Phormio for his limited hospitality towards the Dioscuri, show that offering *xenia* to the gods entailed the same dangers and the same ambiguity as any face-to-face encounter with the divine: the Dioscuri, the previous tenants of Phormion's house, visited Phormion in the likeness of strangers (*ξένοις ἀνδράσι ἐοικότες*) and demanded to stay in the room they most enjoyed, 'when they were still living amongst the humans'; Phormion offered them accommodation in any other room of the house, apart from that particular one, for his daughter, who was still a maiden, was occupying the room. The next morning, the unlucky host found out that denying these simple pleasures of life to divine guests was not such a good idea after all: his own daughter along with her apparel was missing, whilst the room was occupied by the Dioscuri in the form of their statues. In addition, a *trapeza* with silphion, the gods' sacred plant, was placed right in front of the statues.[38]

In iconography, both in votive reliefs and vase paintings, the two gods are depicted as dismounting from their horses to accept the offerings that have been spread out for them in these shared dinners. Alternatively, they are depicted as arriving on horseback to visit humans and partake in their theoxenies. See for instance the scene depicted on the white-ground lekythos originally from Kameiros (Rhodes), now in the British Museum (Fig. 7.1). A draped *klinē* decorated with two cushions and a palm branch is prepared to receive the Dioscuri, who are represented as riders galloping down from the sky.[39]

Like the Dioscuri, Herakles is yet another supernatural figure who oscillates between the spheres of the human and the divine and eventually unites them with his divine presence. Renowned for being a voracious eater, and often parodied as a glutton in a comic context, he travels incognito and enters the houses of mortal men, where he feasts and tests their adherence to the unwritten laws of hospitality.[40] His prolonged and elaborate *xenismoi* became proverbial.[41] The

[37] Hdt. 6.127, which provides us with yet another aetiological myth for the establishment of a private cult of the Dioscuri.

[38] Paus. 3.16.2–3. *τὸ σίλφιον*: laserwort, or *ferula tingitana*, is a plant used both in food and medicine closely associated with Cyrene. More on silphion, its mythological occurrences, and its medicinal properties in Amigues (2004), where also material representations of the plant in Cyrene's coinage can be found.

[39] *ARV*[2] 1615. Cf. Köhne (1998, 128 K3 132); K. Schauenburg in Mél. Mansel I, 1974, 105 Taf. 59b. For similar scenes see *LIMC* III (1986, 576–7 nos 112–16, 118) s.v. *Dioscuri* (A. Hermary). More on reliefs depicting scenes of *theoxenia* with the Dioscuri in Köhne (1998, 128–33); Klöckner (2010, 121–5), and Platt (forthcoming).

[40] On Herakles' oscillating between the mortal and the immortal spheres, see the papers edited by Lévêque and Verbanck-Piérard (1992) and, more recently, Stafford (2010) and (2012) with more bibliography; Herakles in comedy: Wilkins (2000, 90–6); Herakles and his bestial character: collected conference volume edited by Bonnet, Jourdain-Annequin, and Pirenne-Delforge (1998).

[41] Ar. *Lys.* 928 and Schol. *ad* Ar. *Lys.* 928.1 Hangard: *Ἡρακλῆς ξενίζεται Γ*: *παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν βραδυνόντων. οἱ γὰρ ὑποδεχόμενοι τὸν Ἡρακλέα βραδύνουσιν. ἀδηφάγος γὰρ ὁ ἥρως*. Cf. also Suda s.v. *Ἡρακλῆς ξενίζεται*: *παροιμία ἐπὶ τῶν βραδυνόντων. οἱ γὰρ ὑποδεχόμενοι τὸν Ἡρακλέα βραδύνουσι· πολυφάγος γὰρ ὁ ἥρως*. 'It is a proverb that refers to those who delay. Since those who have Herakles as their dinner-guest are delayed; for he is thought to be voracious.'

Fig. 7.1. The Dioscuri arriving to partake in a *theoxenia* rite. Black-figured lekythos from the British Museum, B 633 (1. Inv.), 1867.5-6.39 (2. Inv.); dated to *c*.500 BC.

case of Admetus' offering hospitality to Herakles in his *philoxenos oikos* and Herakles' rescuing his wife Alcestis from Hades to reciprocate for it is perhaps the most well-known example of successful Herakleian *xenia*.[42] Admetus conceals his pain for Alcestis' death out of respect for his divine guest, and offers him a luxurious feast, thus becoming the paradigm of an excellent host. At the antipode of the ideal host, we find accounts of perverted theoxenic rites, such as those performed by Bousiris of Egypt and Syleas of Aulis.[43] The first of the two ungracious hosts made a habit of placing his guests at the sacrificial altar, while the latter used to force them to dig their own graves. Having been faced with such inhospitable behaviour, Herakles kills both men along with their children: Bousiris' son Amphidamas and Syleas' daughter Xenodoke ('she who receives strangers').

Bruit discusses a range of *xenia* rites offered to Herakles and rightly points out that in those narratives violence and animalism prevails.[44] Herakles of the myth appears to be a much more ambiguous guest than Herakles of the cult. It is possible that the beneficial and prolonged shared dining tables of his cult explored and soothed the ambiguities articulated in the corresponding mythic narratives. Through the unwritten but peremptory laws of hospitality, Herakles the voracious eater and potentially the ferocious and vindictive guest would be tamed and safely integrated into the community. In iconography, Herakles is often seen as banqueting in the presence of mortals and/or immortals; in fact, of all of the immortals Herakles is most frequently seen in the company of Dionysus, another most mobile deity who took pleasure in paying visits to the dining chambers of mortals and putting their sense of hospitality on trial.[45]

ZEUS PHILIOS: SUCCESSFUL AND TWISTED THEOXENIC RITES

Zeus Philios, the god presiding over hospitality and conviviality, enjoyed visiting households in disguise and testing their hospitality by partaking in their banquets in disguise. The Cretans always reserved a cult table in their dining rooms, the third from the right as you went in, for Zeus Xenios;[46] while in Athens Zeus Philios became the tutelary god of the *parasitoi* ('those who sit and dine beside'), that is the humans who were given the privilege of dining along with a hero or a god at public or private expense.[47] In fact, Zeus as the tutelary god of friendship

[42] Eur. *Alc.* 838–60; Liban. *Prog.* 2.15.1 Foerster: *πένθους δὲ κατέχοντος τὴν οἰκίαν Ἡρακλῆς ἥκων ξενίζεται καὶ μαθὼν τὴν τύχην καὶ πονέσας καὶ κρατήσας τῶν κάτω δαιμόνων ἐπανάγει τὴν ἄνθρωπον.*

[43] Dio *Or.* 33.47 von Arnim; [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 2.116–17.

[44] Bruit (1989, 18).

[45] As in the fifth-century pelike in the British Museum, where the two gods share the same dining couch, fig. 3 in Verbanck-Piérard (1992); see also idem, 96–7, esp. n. 56. The scene of Herakles and Dionysus eating together is often interpreted as the coupling of the gods of excessive meat eating and drinking respectively.

[46] Pyrgion *FGrHist* 467 F1 = Athen. *Deipn.* 143 e–f Olson: *ἦσαν δὲ καὶ ξενικοὶ θᾶκοι καὶ τράπεζα τρίτη δεξιᾶς εἰσιόντων εἰς τὰ ἀνδρεῖα, ἣν Ξενίου τε Διὸς ξενίαν τε προσηγόρευον.*

[47] Athen. *Deipn.* 6.239b–d Olson. See also Cook's Appendix N (1922, vol. II, part 2, 1169ff.). In different Attic demes, *parasitoi* were attested for ritual dinners offered to the Dioscuri, Apollo (Athen. 6.234f–235c

Fig. 7.2. A votive relief originally from Athens, dated to *c*.350–300 BC, now in Copenhagen (Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek Inv. No. 1558), depicting Zeus Epiteleios Philios and his wife Agathe Tyche venerated by a group of worshippers while receiving *xenia*.

and table fellowship was given appropriate cult titles such as Philios, Soter, Xenios, and Epiteleios, and he was imagined as partaking in a number of theoxenic rites all around Greece, and especially Attica. Zeus Epiteleios Philios along with his female companion (either his wife Agathe Tyche or his mother Philia) are depicted in an Attic votive relief from the fourth century BC (Fig. 7.2). The god reclines on a

Olson), Herakles (*FGrHist* 323 F11), and Athena (Athen. *Deipn*. 6.234f–234d Olson). See Jameson (1999, 447–9) and Naiden (2012), where there is further bibliography. While it is true that we do not actually have any detailed information on where these *parasitoi* sit or what was their way of interacting with the divine guest, if any, it is important that in most cases they appear to be privileged citizens, often quite wealthy, like the two members of the Kerykes genos that were chosen each time to accompany Apollo dining at the Delion in Marathon. The term *parasitoi* later on acquired wider semantic applications, as we can see in Kriton, the comic poet, who in his *Philopragmōn* (Fr. 3 K-A = Athen. *Deipn*. 4.173b Olson) calls the Delians '*parasitoi* of the god'. On *parasitoi* in Cynosarges, in particular, and Herakles as their patron god, and on *parasitoi* in Attic Comedy in general, see Wilkins (2000, 71–86, 93–7). Cf. esp. p. 89 (quoted in n. 30 above). On *parasitoi* and *paredroi* in general, see Bruit Zaidman (1995, esp. 197–200), where more information on *parasitoi* in Athens can be found. On the paradox of immortals needing and consuming mortal food see the forthcoming volume *Violent Commensality: Animal Sacrifice and its Discourses in Antiquity*, co-edited by Rutherford and Hitch (Cambridge).

couch holding a cornucopia, while the female deity is represented seated at the end of the couch; right in front of them, there is a dining table laden with food. To the left side of the composition, three human worshippers (a man flanked by two women) are venerating the deities. The names of the female devotees are included in the inscription at the top of the relief, which reads as follows:

> *Ἀριστομάχη, Θεωρίς,* col. I.1
> *Ὀλυμπιόδωρος*
> *ἀνέθεσαν Διὶ Επιτελείωι Φιλίωι καὶ τῆι μητρὶ τοῦ θεοῦ Φιλίαι* col. II.1
> *καὶ Τύχηι Ἀγαθῆι τοῦ θεοῦ γυναικί.*
>
> Aristomache, Olympiodorus, Theoris dedicated (this) to Zeus Epiteleios Philios, and to Philia, the mother of the god and to Agathe Tyche the god's wife.[48]

Zeus Epiteleios Philios, the male god shown reclining on the draped *klinē*, is the primary recipient of the dedication. The seated female goddess is meant to be Zeus' consort Agathe Tyche, which is why Zeus is depicted carrying the *keras* of Tyche.[49]

This notion of Zeus as a wandering god who often leaves his heavenly abode to occupy in disguise the dining room of some humble household finds its most quoted manifestation in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 8.624–725. Jupiter in human disguise (*specie mortali*, 626), along with his father Kronos, visits a number of houses in a Phrygian village in search of a room and some rest; unfortunately, they are both constantly met with indifference and rejection. In striking contrast to these inhospitable hosts stand the elderly couple of Baucis and Philemon.[50] They may be poor, but they kindly receive their divine guests and provide a most carefully prepared meal for them. The emphasis in the narrative, which verges on being an *ekphrasis* of the preparation and lay out of the shared meal, is on the poor couple's generous hospitality, as opposed to the rest of the more potent but less pious villagers. The divine guests managed to conceal their identity until their hosts attribute the miraculous filling of the wine jar to the divine nature of their guests. A full-scale epiphany follows the gods' declining a sacrificial offering; the gods openly announce their divine identity and they proclaim punishment for those who fail to provide hospitality and cultic honours for the reverent couple.

A Greek prototype for this narrative—which bears some striking similarities to the Greek theoxenic narratives—has long been proposed by several of its commentators.[51] Apart from the Phrygian dramatic context, against such a hypothesis stands the Homeric image of a rigid Zeus, who is everlastingly fixed on his golden throne, and who unlike the remarkable mobility that the rest of the Olympians demonstrate, does not leave Olympus except for his feasts with the Hyperboreans

[48] *IG* II^2 4627. The relief is dated to *c.*350–300 BC; dimensions: H. 0.435 m; W. 0.58 m; Th. 0.117 m; D. (relief) 0.03 m.

[49] According to Smith (2011, 122): 'The divine triad—Philia, Zeus Epiteleios Philios (her son) and Agathe Tyche (his wife)—mirrors the human triad, Aristomache, Olympiodorus (her son), and Theoris (his wife).' More on this relief in Larson (1995, 47–8), van Straten (1995, 74–5), and Ogden (2013, 285, esp. n. 83) with more on the debate whether the seated goddess shown is Tyche or Philia.

[50] Griffin (1991). Cf. also Jones (1994); Galinksy (1975, 197–204); Hollis (1970); and Bömer (1977) ad loc.

[51] Hollis (1970). The reader is here reminded of successful and unsuccessful *xenia* narratives in the Old Testament, such as those of Lot and the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis* 18–19).

or his visits to his cult centre of Mount Ida. According to the ancient Scholiast, Homeric Zeus, unlike his brother Poseidon, never descends to a terrestrial level, and he does not undergo any metamorphosis whatsoever.[52] On a cultic level, nevertheless, Zeus as a deity presiding over hospitality is presented as a much more mobile deity than the rigid and inflexible Homeric Zeus.

Lykaon's offering of hospitality to Zeus is usually discussed under the rubric of unsuccessful *theoxenia* offered to Zeus; according to Apollodorus, nevertheless, Lykaon was a righteous king, who followed the example of his pious father Pelasgos, but who gets punished because of the wickedness and the impiety of his children.[53] Zeus visits Lykaon's family, so the story goes, in the likeness of a day labourer to test their impiety (*Ζεὺς δὲ αὐτῶν βουλόμενος τὴν ἀσέβειαν πειρᾶσαι εἰκασθεὶς ἀνδρὶ χερνήτῃ παραγίνεται*). Lykaon's children offered him hospitality and, having slaughtered a native child, they mixed the child with the sacrificial victims. But Zeus in disgust (*μυσαχθείς*) upset the table and blasted Lykaon with his thunderbolt and all his children but his youngest, Nyctimus. Similar versions of the same story are reported by Nicolaus Damascenus and Hyginus, who adds that Zeus transformed Lykaon into a wolf.[54]

But according to another more popular tradition, it was Lykaon himself who offered Zeus a defiled sacrificial meal, while the victim of the human sacrifice was none other than the king's son, Nyctimus.[55] Pausanias' version is slightly different: Lykaon brings a human baby to the sacrificial altar of Lycaean Zeus and is then immediately transformed into a wolf.[56] Subverted *xenia* ritual offered to the god of *xenia* is subversion of *philoxenia* ritual taken to extremes. The underlying idea in Lykaon's story is that the sacredness of a host should not be put under dispute in any circumstances; in these cases where the divine identity of the guest had been treated with suspicion, severe punishment invariably followed. On the contrary, in these other cases, where humans prove to be exemplary hosts to their divine guests, the gods reciprocate with a most gratifying reward. Such was the case of Macelo and her sisters, the daughters of Damon, who had once entertained jointly Zeus and Apollo. On this account, Zeus spared them when he killed all the Telchines, of whom Damon was the chief, for defiling the fruits of the earth with their wicked techniques.[57] Nonnos uses the same story, only he connects Macelo and Damon with the Phlegyes, and puts it in the mouth of Staphylus as an example of piety that been rewarded by the divine.[58]

[52] Schol. *ad Il.* 13.18b: *Δία δὲ οὐδέποτε κατιόντα καὶ μεταμορφούμενον ποιεῖ.*

[53] [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.8.1.

[54] Nic. Damasc. *FGrHist* 90, F 38; Suda, s.v. *Λυκάων* (A797, Adler); Hyg. *Fab.* 176. Cf. Also Ekroth (2008, 96–7).

[55] Nonnus, *Dionys.* 18.20ff.; Hyg. *Astronom.* 2.4; Schol. Eur. *Or.* 1646; Tzetzes, *Schol. ad Lycophr.* 488; Eratosth. [*Cat.*] C.8.

[56] Paus. 8.2.1.

[57] For the story see Bacchylides' *Ode* 1, with Jebb ad loc. and Maehler ad loc. Cf. also Schol. *ad* Ovid *Ibis* 475; Serv. *ad Aen.* 6.618.

[58] Nonnus, *Dionys.* 18.149–52.

DIONYSUS' 'ITINERARY EPIPHANIES'

Dionysus appears in the guise of a traveller entering the Lenaean theatre of Athens in the opening scene of Aristophanes' *Frogs*. Being one of what the Greeks called *theoi planētes* he offers his theatrical audience one of his 'itinerant epiphanies', as Detienne calls them.[59] Dionysus is not verbatim called a *xenos* in the prologue of the play. To be identified as a stranger, one needs a wider native community to contrast oneself with, and this is exactly what happens in lines 433 onwards, when Dionysus in the guise of Herakles meets the chorus of Batrachoi and describes himself and Xanthias as two newly arrived travellers (*ξένω γάρ ἐσμεν ἀρτίως ἀφιγμένω*). Dionysus imagines the Netherworld—which the Greeks also called 'the chambers of Persephone' (*Persephoneia dōmata*) or the 'House of Hades' (*tou Haidou oikos*)—as a new indigenous, and even potentially dangerous, community that has to be approached with diplomacy; as a *xenos* he must be met with a much-desired invitation to a feast (*deipnon*) of hospitality from his new hosts to be reassured of their noble intentions, an invitation which, in fact, takes place at 503ff. Persephone's maid invites Dionysus–pseudo-Herakles to a feast of conviviality, which is undoubtedly an instance of the widespread cultural schema of *theoxenia*.

Dionysus' 'introduction myths', as Dodds called them, are situated within early political formations such as the monarchy in Athens, the rule of the Minyae in Orchomenos, and that of the Proitides and the Perseides at Argos, and, of course, the Cadmeian rule at Thebes.[60] This element per se can be read as a strong indication of the antiquity of Dionysus' cult. Dionysus enters both the theatrical and the cultic scene of the Greek polis as a traveller, a wandering missionary of his own sacred rites, a divine visitor returning to his maternal homeland, a stranger, a *xenos*. Euripides in his *Bacchae* produced the epitome of a theatrical re-enactment of the god's arrival at Thebes and the stern resistance that he was met with there.[61] In the Greek mind, Dionysus always visited the Greek city state as a *xenos*, as a stranger; he had repeatedly to fight hard to secure for himself a place in the city pantheon. In Attic ritual an expression of this Dionysiac 'otherness' can be traced in the preliminary rites inaugurating the City Dionysia: the god in the form of his cult statue (*effigies* epiphany) was entering the city from outside. Nevertheless, it would be unfair to think that Dionysus' arrival was invariably met with violent resistance; quite the contrary, in the course of his endless wanderings he occasionally received warm and generous hospitality from some of his human hosts, such as Brongos and Oeneus (while travelling in the exotic lands of Lydia and India), Amphictyon, Pegasos of Eleutherai, and Icarius in Athens.

In a delightful passage from Nonnus, Bacchus is entertained in Brongos' humble dwelling.[62] The shepherd had met with the travelling god and his thiasos

[59] Detienne (1989, 5).

[60] On the introduction myths see Otto (1933, ch. 2), Dodds (1960, xxiff.), and Burnett (1970, 27f.); and more recently Detienne (1989, 10–14ff.), Versnel (1990), Seaford (1994, chs 7 and 8), and Lada-Richards (1999, 123ff.).

[61] Dionysus as *xenos* in Eur. *Bacch*.: 233, 247, 353, 441, 453, 64, 1059, 1077, etc.

[62] Nonnus, *Dionys*. 17.81–6 Keydell: 'thus, he spoke and gave his gift of gratitude for the shepherd's table (*νομίης ξεινήια δῶκε τραπέζης*), the fine fruitage of grapes, the mother of wine, that comforts

on some remote mountain glens, a motif that we have met before (see chapter 4). The poor shepherd most kindly shared with the god a feast of milk, fruit, olives, cheese, but no meat. Dionysus reciprocates for the *xenia* by offering his host wine and the secrets of viniculture.[63] As far as Oeneus is concerned, his most strange case of *theoxenia* is to be found in Hyginus: Dionysus receives entertainment at the house of Oeneus and falls in love with his wife Althaea.[64] Oeneus, as soon as he becomes aware of the amorous liaison, finds a pretext to leave the couple alone. Deianeira becomes the fruit of their union. Having enjoyed such generous and warm (!) hospitality, the god reciprocates by unveiling the mystery of the production of wine and the cultivation of the vine tree to Althaea's husband. This is often the case with those mortals who manage to receive successfully the wandering god: they receive in exchange the divine gift of viticulture. Thus, by providing *philoxenia* to a culture-bringing deity, these hospitable hosts become themselves the culture bringers.[65]

In Athens, Icarius was the first man who received the god in his house and later on, as a reward, he received the gift of viticulture.[66] As the god's first missionary, he suffers and eventually is murdered by his fellow farmers while trying to share with them the divine gift. Pausanias saw an iconographical representation of this theoxenic scene in the god's sanctuary in Athens; a tableau vivant made of clay depicted the god being entertained by Amphictyon, and, along with him, Icarius, and Pegasus of Eleutherai, the god's first Attic hosts.[67] Hence, Icarius becomes Dionysus' agent in the distribution of viticulture, in the same way that Triptolemos becomes Demeter's agent in the distribution of wheat, according to some (Orphic-Pythagorean?) versions of the myth.[68]

sorrow. And the divine lord taught him the flower loving technique of the vine yard: how to bend the slips of the plants over into fertilizing pits, and how to cut the very top shoots of an old vine, so that new shoots of wine-gendering grapes may grow.'

[63] The narrative looks as if it had been informed of actual theoxenic rituals in honour of Cybele Oresaule (of the highlands) as mentioned in lines 62–3 of the poem.

[64] Hyg. *Fab.* 129: *Liber cum ad Oeneum Parthaonis filium in hospitium venisset, Althaeam Thestii filiam uxorem Oenei adamavit, quod Oeneus ut sensit, voluntate sua ex urbe excessit simulatque se sacra facere. At Liber cum Althaea concubuit, ex qua nata est Deianira, Oeneo autem ob hospitium liberale muneri vitem dedit monstravitque quomode sereret, fructumque eius ex nomine hospitis οἶνον ut vocaretur instituit.* Cf. also [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.8.1.

[65] For Dionysus as a culture/civilization bringer and peacemaker see, for instance, Diod. Sic. 3.64.7.

[66] Schol. *ad* Luc. 79.22.2 Rabe: *<Ἰκάριον*>] [Ἀθηναῖος οὗ]τος ὁ Ἰκάριος, [ᾧ πρώτῳ Διόν]υσος ἐπιξενω[θεὶς γεωργῷ ὅ]ντι φιλοφρο[νήματι τοῦτον] τετίμηκε τῆς ξε[νίας τὴν τῆς ἀμ]πέλου φιλοπονίαν [διδάξας.* Cf. also Achilles Tatius 2.2.1–6: Dionysus is entertained by a shepherd in Tyros. The story becomes the *aition* myth for establishing the god's festival: 'There was a certain shepherd noted for his hospitality, just as the Athenians describe Icarius, from whom this Tyrian story derives its origin, so that it almost seems an Attic traditional tale.' Sourvinou-Inwood (1994, 273–4) argues compellingly that it was the first introduction of Dionysus and the god's *xenismos* by the people of Athens that lay at the heart of both the myth and the ritual of the City Dionysia rather than the annexing of Dionysus' cult at Eleutherai by Athens.

[67] Paus. 1.2.5: *μετὰ δὲ τὸ τοῦ Διονύσου τέμενός ἐστιν οἴκημα ἀγάλματα ἔχον ἐκ πηλοῦ, βασιλεὺς Ἀθηναίων Ἀμφικτύων ἄλλους τε θεοὺς ἑστιῶν καὶ Διόνυσον. ἐνταῦθα καὶ Πήγασός ἐστιν Ελευθερεύς, ὃς Ἀθηναίοις <τὸν> θεὸν ἐσήγαγε· συνεπελάβετο δέ οἱ τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς μαντεῖον ἀναμνῆσαν τὴν ἐπὶ Ἰκαρίου ποτὲ ἐπιδημίαν τοῦ θεοῦ.*

[68] In Pseudo-Apollodorus' version, Triptolemos is Metaneira's son and Demeter's agent (*Bibl.* 1.5.2): *Τριπτολέμῳ δὲ τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ τῶν Μετανείρας παίδων δίφρον κατασκευάσασα πτηνῶν*

The list of Dionysus' successful *theoxenia* also includes Semachos and Staphylos. The latter appears to be a most hospitable host who was generously rewarded by the god in Nonnus' version, while the ancient Scholiast to Aristophanes' *Plutos* includes Staphylos in the list of the god's lovers.[69] As far as Semachus is concerned, his kind of unconditional hospitality resembles in a sense that of Oeneus: Dionysus, while entertained by the man, slept with his daughters, who later on became his priestesses. Their descendants were called Semachidae and so was one of the Attic demes.[70] The surprising wording of the lexicographer implies that the sleeping with Semachus' daughters was the main theoxenic ritual offered to the god.[71]

A similar theoxenic ritual that included sexual services on the menu was offered to Herakles, while he was entertained by Thestios at Thespiae: the story goes that the god slept with all fifty of his host's daughters apart from one; Herakles got offended thinking that he was scorned by the girl and condemned her to remain a virgin for the rest of her life and serve him as his priestess.[72] In other versions of the same core narrative all the girls bore Herakles sons, apart from the eldest and the youngest one, who bore him twins.

At the antipodes of successfully entertaining Dionysus, Lykourgos, the king of the Thracian Edonoi, was the first to insult the god and expel him.[73] In addition, he managed to imprison his *thiasos* of the Bacchae and the Satyroi, while the god himself took refuge in the sea in the arms of the goddess Thetis. To avenge his hostile reception, Dionysus drove the king mad and forced him to slay his own son with an axe while under the illusion that he was cutting down a vine tree. In the end, Lykourgos was put to death by his own people, who were prompted to do so by the Delphi oracle. Nonnus' version of the myth (which locates Lykourgos in Arabia not Thrace) is interspersed with graphic details of horror, culminating in a bloodthirsty subversion of the sacrificial and theoxenic ritual: instead of sacrificing in honour of his guests, Lykourgos used to sacrifice the guests themselves and keep blood-soaked memoirs of their unfortunate encounters.[74] His savage behaviour

δρακόντων τὸν πυρὸν ἔδωκεν, ᾧ τὴν ὅλην οἰκουμένην δι' οὐρανοῦ αἰρόμενος κατέσπειρε. The same author mentions Dionysus' advent to Athens jointly with that of Demeter and dates them to Pandion's reign ([Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.14.7). This differs from the Parian marble that dates their advent to the reign of his son Erechtheus (*Marmor Parium*, 23ff.).

[69] Schol. *ad* Ar. *Plut.* 1020 Dübner: *Ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἐν Θάσῳ ᾤκει Στάφυλος ὁ ἐρώμενος τοῦ Διονύσου· διαφέρει γὰρ ὁ Θάσιος οἶνος*.

[70] Steph. Byz. s.v. *Σημαχίδαι, δῆμος Ἀττικῆς, ἀπὸ Σημάχου, ᾧ καὶ ταῖς θυγατράσιν ἐπεξενώθη Διόνυσος, ἀφ' ὧν αἱ ἱέρειαι αὐτοῦ*.

[71] Or is it simply another indication of the close relationship between the god and his priesthood?

[72] Paus. 9.27.6–8: *καὶ Ἡρακλέους Θεσπιεῦσίν ἐστιν ἱερόν· ἱερᾶται δὲ αὐτοῦ παρθένος, ἔστ' ἂν ἐπιλάβῃ τὸ χρεὼν αὐτήν. αἴτιον δὲ τούτου φασὶν εἶναι τοιόνδε, Ἡρακλέα ταῖς θυγατράσι πεντήκοντα οὔσαις ταῖς Θεστίου συγγενέσθαι πάσαις πλὴν μιᾶς ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ νυκτί· ταύτην δὲ οὐκ ἐθελῆσαί οἱ τὴν μίαν μιχθῆναι· <τὸν δὲ ὑβρισθῆναι> νομίζοντα δικάσαι μένειν παρθένον πάντα αὐτὴν τὸν βίον ἱερωμένην αὐτῷ. ἐγὼ δὲ ἥκουσα μὲν καὶ ἄλλον λόγον, ὡς διὰ πασῶν ὁ Ἡρακλῆς τῶν Θεστίου παρθένων διεξέλθοι τῇ αὐτῇ νυκτὶ καὶ ὡς ἄρσενας παῖδας αὐτῷ πᾶσαι τέκοιεν, διδύμους δὲ ἥ τε νεωτάτη καὶ ἡ πρεσβυτάτη· ἐκεῖνο δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως ἡγήσομαι πιστόν, Ἡρακλέα ἐπὶ τοσοῦτο ὀργῆς ἀνδρὸς φίλου θυγατρὶ ἀφικέσθαι· πρὸς δὲ καὶ ἡνίκα ἔτι ἦν μετ' ἀνθρώπων, τιμωρούμενός τε ἄλλους ὑβρίζοντας καὶ μάλιστα ὅσοι θεῶν ἀσεβεῖς ἦσαν, οὐκ ἂν αὐτός γε κατεστήσατο αὐτῷ ναόν τε καὶ ἱέρειαν ὥσπερ δὴ θεός*. The narrative serves as the *aition* for the *dia biou* virginity of Herakles' priestess. Cf. also [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 2.4.10; Diod. Sic. 4.29.

[73] [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 3.5.1.

[74] Nonnus, *Dionys.* 20.149–53.

was not restricted to the strangers asking for hospitality on his threshold, but it was expanded to wandering wayfarers whom he happened to meet at crossroads: he would have them bound, or so we are told, and having dragged them to his house, he sacrificed them to his father Ares, and subsequently hung their limbs as trophies in his halls.[75]

Gods while travelling, no matter what form they would assume in their travels, were bound to be perceived as *ξένοι*, strangers. So Dionysus in Euripides' *Bacchae*, who after years of travelling comes back to his native Thebes only to be met with abuse and ridicule. For this reason, Pentheus, the inhospitable host, suffers the rage of the god.[76] The same fear of abusing a deity in the guise of a stranger lurks in the back of the suitors' mind, when one of them reproaches Antinous for abusing Odysseus.[77] In a traveller at their threshold Greeks tended to see a god in disguise, and simultaneously a potential threat. A *xenos* was considered to be a creature of ambiguous nature, and therefore was regarded with awe, curiosity, and fear. His presence was often seen as an intrusion into the local people's life and a threat to the societal equilibrium.[78] A *xenos* should not be met with abuse or cruelty, for 'strangers and beggars come from Zeus'.[79] On the contrary, a *xenos* should be offered warm and generous hospitality and given any extra help he may need, precisely because if he turned out to be a deity in disguise, the uninviting host would have to deal with dire consequences.

DEMETER'S *PAROUSIA* AND POLITICAL RIVALRY

Demeter operates in the same capacity as Dionysus in that she is also a divine culture bringer. Quite often the two deities are mentioned (or indeed shown) together, the implication being that they are of complementary nature: Dionysus the god of wine and viticulture and Demeter the divine agent of agriculture and of wheat and the other crops that were named after her (*Demetriaka* or *Demetriakoi karpoi*).[80] There is, though, a major difference: while Dionysus sets out to expand his religious clientele by requesting *xenia* from the sociopolitical elite of the cities

[75] Nonnus, *Dionys.* 20.167–82. Cf. also Hyg. *Fab.* 132. [76] Burnett (1970).

[77] *Od.* 17.483–7. A most entertaining reworking of the sentiment of the Homeric passage is to be found in Eunapius in his *Vitae sophistarum* 6.7ff. where he tells us all about the two elderly strangers that visited Sosipatra's (the female philosopher's) parents when she was five years old and, having been entertained by them, they asked to be entrusted with the upbringing of the little girl up to a certain age. Sosipatra's father concluded that the *presbytai* were gods in disguise precisely because he thinks of the same lines of *Odyssey* 17 mentioned above. Eunapius quotes *Od.* 17.485–6 and then: *καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ᾤετο ξένοις μὲν ἀνδράσι, θεοῖς δὲ συντετυχηκέναι.* A somewhat more postmodern, ironic handling of the concept is offered by Herodas (*Mim.* 1.8 Cunningham): *στρέψον τι, δούλη. τίς σε μοῖρ' ἔπεισ' ἐλθεῖν, Γυλλίς, πρὸς ἡμέας; τί σὺ θεὸς πρὸς ἀνθρώπους;*

[78] For the complex and ambiguous nature of the *xenos* in ancient Greece see Massenzio (1970, 49ff.) and Auffarth (1992, 199–206); on *xenos* in modern Greece see Blum (1970, 296ff.).

[79] *Od.* 6.208–9: *πρὸς γὰρ Διός εἰσιν ἅπαντες | ξεῖνοί τε πτωχοί τε, δόσις δ' ὀλίγη τε φίλη τε.* Cf. also what Alcinous says in *Od.* 7.195–205. On this cultural pattern recognizable also in the ancient Near East, see Auffarth (1992, 199–216).

[80] Cf. for instance, slab IV of the east frieze of Parthenon at the British Museum, which shows Dionysus and Demeter seated side by side with their legs interlocked. On the interpretation of the scene

he enters, Demeter's wanderings and her subsequent *parousia* in the cities of man is triggered not by some sort of ambitious religious imperialism but by loss and bereavement. Demeter's *epiphaneia* is motivated by the disappearance (*aphaneia*) of her daughter.[81] In her wanderings, she is given hospitality in houses all around the Greek-speaking world. Those who receive the goddess (who appears most of the time disguised as an old woman) gladly and warmly are rewarded with the knowledge of agriculture and, in some cases, with a conspicuous place in the goddess's priestly personnel, like Chthonia the daughter of Kolontas in Hermione.[82] Those others who refuse to provide the goddess with hospitality receive harsh penalties, as in the case of Kolontas who was burnt down along with his own house.

In almost every single narrative gathered here, Demeter's *xenismos* is accompanied by the establishment of either secret rites and/or a festival in her honour. Demeter's successful *theoxenia* by Mysios in Pellene, for example, was followed by a seven-day festival, which had also a mysteric aspect to it; the secret rites in honour of Demeter were celebrated on the third day of the festival and carried all the trademarks of fertility mystery rites, such as segregation of the sexes and a jocose atmosphere after their reunion.[83] The festivals or the mysteric rites often included in their sacred logos some of the figures that were conspicuous in the goddess's *xenismos*. In Hermione, for instance, the annual festival was called Chthonia and was mainly built, according to Pausanias, around the mythic persona of Kolontas' daughter, while in Eleusis the children of Keleos, Triptolemos, Eumolpos, and Euboulos, or Eubouleus, must have played an important role in the *hieros logos* of Eleusis, as is shown by both the literary and iconographical evidence.[84]

In Eleusis, her most renowned cultic centre, Demeter was entertained by Baubo and Dysaules (according to Clement), or by Keleos and Metaneira (according to the Homeric hymn and Pseudo-Apollodorus).[85] Ovid is the only one who makes Keleos a poor old man the goddess meets on his way to his humble but hospitable abode.[86] In the rest of the narratives, Demeter's host in Eleusis, called variably Keleos, Eleusinos, and Eleusis, is Eleusis' king or, at least, one of the city's distinguished citizens.[87]

It is worth noting, however, that in Eleusis, at least according to the author of the Homeric hymn, Demeter does not appear to give her hosts the gift of cereal

as *theoxenia*, see Connelly (1996) and Neils (1999) and (2001). For a more recent discussion of the frieze, see Connelly (2014, 149–209).

[81] On Kore's *aphaneia* see chapter 6. [82] Paus. 2.35.4–8. [83] Paus. 7.27.9.

[84] See for instance the Regina Vasorum (Clinton 1992, p. 79, fig. III. 9), the Niinion tablet, and the votive relief of the mission of Triptolemos (Mylonas 1961, figs 88 and 74 respectively).

[85] Clem. *Protr.* 2.20.1–21.2 Mondésert; [Apollod.] *Bibl.* 1.5.1. [86] *Fasti* 4.507–61.

[87] Keleos: Paus. 1.39.1–2 along with the rest of the sources mentioned above; Eleusinos: Hyg. *Fab.* 147, Servius *ad* Verg. *Georg.* 1.19; Eleusis: Paus. 8.38.7. Sourvinou-Inwood (2003a, 39) rightly argues that that Demeter's *xenismos* by Keleos was of great significance for the both the poliadic/public and the mysteric/private segments of the Great Mysteries at Eleusis. This was partly because Demeter's arrival in Athens in the form of the *hiera*, the sacred secret objects which travelled from Eleusis to the Attic Eleusinion, was a major theme of the poliadic/public segment of the festival, and partly because the goddess's arrival in Eleusis and her ritual reception by the local people could have been among the themes explored in the sacred drama.

crops as she does in the rest of her *xenismoi*. It seems that Demeter in Attica was interested in matters with a distinct eschatological dimension.[88] In fact, by the time Demeter manifests herself cereals are already known to humans. It is in response to a crisis, a famine, that the goddess manifests herself on Attic land according to Diodorus.[89] In Athens, the closest we come to the typical *xenismos* culture gift sequence is with Phytalos, who kindly received the goddess in his house and was given in exchange 'the first fruit' of the season, the fig tree. The whole *theoxenic* episode was inscribed on an inscription still readable in Pausanias' day.[90] The passage deserves full quotation:

> ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ζεφύρου τε βωμὸς καὶ Δήμητρος ἱερὸν καὶ τῆς παιδός· σὺν δέ σφισιν Ἀθηνᾶ καὶ Ποσειδῶν ἔχουσι τιμάς. ἐν τούτῳ τῷ χωρίῳ Φύταλόν φασιν οἴκῳ Δήμητρα δέξασθαι, καὶ τὴν θεὸν ἀντὶ τούτων δοῦναί οἱ τὸ φυτὸν τῆς συκῆς· μαρτυρεῖ δέ μοι τῷ λόγῳ τὸ ἐπίγραμμα τὸ ἐπὶ τῷ Φυτάλου τάφῳ·
>
> ἐνθάδ' ἄναξ ἥρως Φύταλός ποτε δέξατο σεμνὴν
> Δήμητρα<ν>, ὅτε πρῶτον ὀπώρας καρπὸν ἔφηνεν,
> ἣν ἱερὰν συκῆν θνητῶν γένος ἐξονομάζει·
> ἐξ οὗ δὴ τιμὰς Φυτάλου γένος ἔσχεν ἀγήρως.
>
> There is also an altar of Zephyros and a sanctuary of Demeter and her daughter. With them Athena and Poseidon are worshipped. In this place they say that Phytalos welcomed Demeter to his home, for which act the goddess gave him the fig tree. The following inscription on the grave of Phytalos bears witness to that story:
>
> Here Phytalos, hero and king gave *xenia* to Demeter,
> the solemn goddess, when first she revealed the fruit of the harvest,
> that the race of mortal men calls sacred fig tree;
> from that point onwards, Phytalos and his race received immortal honours.

It seems that Phytalos' descendants in Athens enjoyed privileges equivalent to those of members of the priestly personnel in Eleusis, if we are to judge from the tradition that has Theseus' purification performed by the Phytalidae.[91] As already mentioned in chapter 4, it is tempting to look at them as a *genos* of priesthood with pure Athenian origins who were 'outshone' by the Kerykes and the Eumolpidae after the union of Athens with Eleusis, with the centre of attention shifting from Athenian Eleusinion to Eleusinian Megaron.

Rhetorical manipulation and political exploitation are the two predominant features of the narratives which account for Demeter's *xenismos* in Athens. This can easily be explained by the wider generic context of these narratives, which are mainly gleaned from political and forensic rhetorical speeches. Isocrates in his *Panegyricus*, for instance, suggests that by offering hospitality to the goddess, his Athenian ancestors—note here the careful glossing over of the aristocratic origins of Keleos' family—receive as a gift for the first time the cereal crops.[92] The

[88] Contra Bowden (2010, 22–3).

[89] Diod. Sic. 1.29.2–4 Vogel & Fischer = Hecataeus of Miletus *FGrHist F* 3a.264.F. fr. 25).

[90] Paus. 1.37.2.

[91] Plut. *Thes*. 12.1 and 23.5.

[92] Isocr. *Paneg*. 28.4–29.1 Mathieu & Brémond: Πρῶτον μὲν τοίνυν, οὗ πρῶτον ἡ φύσις ἡμῶν ἐδεήθη, διὰ τῆς πόλεως τῆς ἡμετέρας ἐπορίσθη· καὶ γὰρ εἰ μυθώδης ὁ λόγος γέγονεν, ὅμως αὐτῷ καὶ νῦν ῥηθῆναι προσήκει. Δήμητρος γὰρ ἀφικομένης εἰς τὴν χώραν, ὅτ' ἐπλανήθη τῆς Κόρης ἁρπασθείσης, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς

orator makes it sound as if the whole city received the goddess, not just a few of its privileged members. Thus, the whole city became a culture bringer for the sake of the whole of humanity. Cicero, on the other hand, exploits Demeter's *parousia* for his own political reasons and employs them in his venomous persecution of Verres.[93] Cicero is of the same mind as Diodorus: agriculture and wheat first appear in Sicily precisely because the island was the birthplace of Demeter and Kore. It was there, or so we are told, in a wood near Enna, that Persephone or rather Proserpina was abducted by Hades and plunged under the ground in a place not very far from Syracuse.[94] The ground opened wide to receive the divine couple and was later miraculously filled up with water, where lake Kyane was created.[95] To commemorate the disappearance of Kore, the Syracusans used to drown a cow in an annual festival called Kore's *katagōgē*.

Significantly, most of the narratives that are centered around Demeter's first epiphany on terrestrial ground appear to be keen to address the burning question of which city Demeter visited first. To take Diodorus' account as an example, although the eloquent author does not want to offend the Athenians by casting doubts on the local tradition that had Athens as the first city of men offering *xenia* to the goddess, he does not shy away from stating his point of view, namely that the first city Demeter ever visited in her quest for Kore was Sicily and not Athens. Note, however, how carefully and charming the wording of that statement is: 'in a most charitable way the Athenians offered hospitality to the goddess, and *first they, right after the Sicilians,* received the cereal crops' (*φιλανθρωπότατα δὲ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὑποδεξαμένων τὴν θεόν, πρώτοις τούτοις μετὰ τοὺς Σικελιώτας δωρήσασθαι τὸν τῶν πυρῶν καρπόν*).[96]

The people of Argos, on the other hand, were not bothered with sensitivities of that kind: it was to Argos that Demeter came first and it was in the house of Pelasgos in Argos that she received hospitality and established her secret sacred rites, or so the Argeians claimed according to Pausanias.[97] The same local tradition had it that Triptolemos and Eubouleus were actually the children of an Argeian hierophant, who left his city and got married to a woman from Eleusis! Other cities, whose priestly personnel became equally ambitious, did not go so far as to question the originality or the prevalence of the Mysteries of Eleusis. Instead, they happily conceded to their secret rites being derivative and originating from those in Eleusis.[98] In fact, some of them were actually proud of their own *mystēria*

προγόνους ἡμῶν εὐμενῶς διατεθείσης ἐκ τῶν εὐεργεσιῶν, ἃς οὐχ οἷόν τ' ἄλλοις ἢ τοῖς μεμυημένοις ἀκούειν, καὶ δούσης δωρεὰς διττὰς, αἵπερ μέγισται τυγχάνουσιν οὖσαι, τούς τε καρποὺς, οἳ τοῦ μὴ θηριωδῶς ζῆν ἡμᾶς αἴτιοι γεγόνασιν, καὶ τὴν τελετὴν, ἧς οἱ μετασχόντες περί τε τῆς τοῦ βίου τελευτῆς καὶ τοῦ σύμπαντος αἰῶνος ἡδίους τὰς ἐλπίδας ἔχουσιν, 29.1 *οὕτως ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν οὐ μόνον θεοφιλὼς, ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλανθρώπως ἔσχεν, ὥστε κυρία γενομένη τοσούτων ἀγαθῶν οὐκ ἐφθόνησεν τοῖς ἄλλοις, ἀλλ' ὧν ἔλαβεν ἅπασιν μετέδωκεν.*

[93] Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.47, §§106–8: *Nam et natas esse has in iis locis deas et fruges in ea terra primum repertas esse arbitrantur . . .*

[94] On the cult of Proserpina in Sicily see chapter 6, 'Dionysus' and Kore's advent festivals'.

[95] Diod. Sic. 5.4.6ff. The Sicilians have two festivals, one for Persephone in early summer and one for Demeter at sowing time in autumn.

[96] Diod. Sic. 5.4.3–4. [97] Paus. 1.14.2–3.

[98] Jost (2003, 151ff.) offers an excellent discussion of the problems, the methods, and the political agenda behind claims of affinity with the cult centre of Eleusis.

being modelled on the solemn and august Eleusinian ceremonies; what they did debate, however, was the degree of their affinity to them. In the Arcadian city of Pheneos, for instance, Demeter was worshipped under three different *epiklēseis*: Eleusinia, Kidaria, and Thesmia; indeed, she was the subject of *teletai* under all three of her cultic names.[99] But while the secret rites of Demeter Eleusinia were said to have been established by one of Eumolpos' descendants, those other rites held in honour of Demeter Thesmia were the only ones established by the goddess herself after having being entertained in the house of Trisaules and Damithales.

It must have become apparent by now that cities took pride in having divine names such as those of Dionysus and Demeter in their visitors' book and that they hardly missed any opportunity to remind each other of these divine visitors and even to compete with each other on that basis. Thus, in a sense, the idea of divine mobility and the belief in divine immigration from one cult place to another seem to be firmly embedded not only in the collective imagination of the citizens, but also in the civic political discourse.

SYNOPSIS

If one were to conclude from the narratives discussed above that offering elaborate ritualized hospitality to gods and heroes was an Archaic and to an extent aristocratic practice, one would not be very far from the truth. Indeed, it was mostly the members of royal *oikoi*, or of the socio-economic elite, that entertained these supernatural beings, at least in the earlier of our narratives. In some cases, this link between the *xenismos* of a deity and the aristocratic and/or partly divine lineage of the *xenistēs* was so strong that the former was thought of as the natural consequence of the latter: the visit which Herakles paid to Lysis' ancestor, for example, as embedded in Hippothales' passionate encomiastic poetry, was attributed to their *συγγένεια*:

> All he can think of to say or write is stuff the whole city goes around singing, poems about Democrates and the boy's grandfather Lysis and all his ancestors, their wealth and their stables and their victories at the Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean games in the chariot and the horseback races. And then he gets into the really ancient history: just the day before yesterday he was reciting some poem to us about Herakles being entertained (*τὸν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ξενισμόν*) by one of his ancestors, saying that it was because his ancestor was related to the hero (something about him being the son of Zeus and the daughter of their deme's founding father) that the man entertained Herakles (*ὡς διὰ τὴν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους συγγένειαν ὁ πρόγονος ὑπεδέξαιτο τὸν Ἡρακλέα*), old women's songs, Socrates, and many other poems of similar quality.[100]

However, at some point between the late Archaic and the early Classical era, offering expensive sacrificial feasts to the city gods and heroes becomes primarily the privilege of the polis.[101] To take Demeter's *xenismos* as an example, so far we

[99] Paus. 8.15.1–4 with Jost (2003, 144).
[100] Plat. *Lys*. 205c–d. More on *philia* and *syggeneia* in Plato's *Lysis* in Price (1989, 1–14).
[101] Bruit (1989, 20).

have seen several mythical exempla where the patron deity of agriculture is being offered *xenia* by the members of an aristocratic *oikos*. The immediate descendants of this first *xenistēs* are given extra privileges and *timai*, which are in time fully embedded in the poliadic celebrations, and thus in some ways appropriated and fully neutralized by the democratic polis.[102] Divine guests continued, of course, to be entertained by rich and powerful families, and occasionally got invited even to private functions, such as weddings; and yet it was the polis that gradually started perceiving itself as a collective household, ready to offer entertainment to distinguished members of both divine and mortal spheres. We immediately remind ourselves here of the annual Dioscuri *xenia* ritual that took place in the Athenian Prytaneion, where the collective hearth of the city was located. Some Athenian citizen representatives of the whole community dine along with the poliadic gods, thus renewing bonds of familiarity and friendship and securing prosperity and divine blessings for the whole polis.

New gods, on the other hand, like Asclepius or Cybele, had to be entertained in the old traditional way, that is by visiting privately the dwelling and the dining room of distinguished Athenian citizens, such as those of Telemachus and Sophocles. In this way they could align themselves with the older *xenismoi* of the already well-established gods of the city pantheon (such as Demeter, Dionysus, Dioscuri, and Herakles) that also took place in the lodgings of distinguished individuals.[103]

What are we to make of all this? Were mortals really imagined as feasting with the immortals? Nock's answer is negative, at least to the second part of the question: in historical Greece, there is no indication of communion or commensality with the gods and the heroes.[104] In his discussion, the emphasis is on the cultic evidence, while myth is only sporadically touched upon. Along the same lines, Jameson maintains that preparing dining couches and tables does not necessarily mean feasting together.[105] In his view, theoxenic rites were only another way of securing divine blessings for their meals; perhaps an alternative to sacrifice, that is another way to offer food to the gods, a 'more substantial and more dramatically effective' one. Gill's view that cooked portions of food placed on the altars or tables offer a more substantial alternative to the paltry divine portion in the sacrificial feast is rightly rejected by Bruit.

In fact, Bruit is an exception in that she discusses both myth and cult proportionately.[106] She lays extra emphasis on the dyadic nature of Herakles and the Dioscuri—the two deities who oscillate between the human and the divine spheres were perhaps the most sought after supernatural guests in these shared dinners—and proposes to view this communal dinning (between mortals and immortals) as compensating for the otherwise unbridgeable gap between them. On a civic level, theoxenic rites appear to be effective in more than one way: a) they bridge the gap between the known and the unknown, between the civic core and all those who in one way or the other invade the safe microcosm of the polis (travelling humans and wandering gods); b) the practice of ritual communal dining sanctifies human

[102] See also the introductory section of this chapter for an analogous development in Dionysus' *xenismoi*.

[103] More on this issue in chapter 8. [104] Nock (1972, 575–89).

[105] Jameson (1999). [106] Bruit (1989, 17ff.).

commensality: a human cultural institution is raised to another, much higher level; c) simultaneously, it is a great opportunity for the city to reaffirm its civic values and strengthen the bonds of conviviality between its inhabitants, while occasionally it gets the chance to appear secure, magnanimous, and grandiose to social groups of ambiguous and often problematic nature, such as slaves and foreigners.[107]

In this light, theoxenic rites are seen as uniting the mortal and the immortal spheres, which had been separated exactly due to the Promethean subversion of *xenia,* via the medium of ritual dining. The food offerings to the gods and heroes partaking in the feast are not burnt on the altar, as in the context of an ordinary sacrifice; they are placed on sacred tables specially designed for the occasion. The deities are invited to feast from these tables and recline on the guest couches specially designated for the divine. In other words, in these rather anthropocentric rites of *theoxenia*, the gods are imagined as following the protocol of human dining. The divine guests are treated like foreigners, travellers, or strangers who momentarily pose a threat to the well-ordered microcosm of the city; they need to be treated with discretion so as not to be offended. The social institution of *xenia* provided an opportunity for safe (that is spatially and temporality controlled) interaction between citizens and strangers, between insiders and outsiders, and, effectively, between mortals and immortals.

[107] Slaves and masters shared tables in some of the theoxenic festivals, such as the famous Hyakinthia in honour of Apollo. See, for instance, the fragment of Polycrates of Sparta's *History of Sparta* (*FGrHist* 588 F1), as quoted by Athen. *Deipn*. 4.139d Olson with Verbanck-Pierard (1992, 101): 'Moreover, it is now proved that the main feature of the festivals of *theoxeniai* . . . is to accept a wide public: they are festivals of integration and of temporary equality in regard to food.' On the same festival and an informative analysis on the 'social technology' behind *xenia* and *theoxenia* rites, see Bruit (1990).

8

Synthesis

Epiphany and its sociopolitical functions

The preceding chapters have concentrated on the outer structure of epiphanic manifestations, that is the different contexts in which an epiphany takes place (chapters 2–7) and the various forms in which a deity manifests itself (chapter 1). This chapter revisits the same issues of spatio-temporal context and morphology of divine epiphany but shifts the focus, and sets out to explore the different functions and wider cultural repercussions epiphany may have had for both the individual and the community. These functions have already been previewed in the Introduction and some of the previous chapters (especially in chapters 5, 6, and 7) or have been briefly hinted at (in the rest of the chapters). These same functions will be reviewed here and refocused. Chapter 8 is thus exclusively devoted to this functional aspect of epiphany and attempts to provide some answers to the all-important question: what did the Greeks do with their epiphanies?

There are, in fact, two ways of looking at this functional aspect of the divine epiphany: one way would be to examine epiphanies closely from the synchronic point of view of the religious insider—let us call this the microscopic analysis; and a second way to go about it would be to study them macroscopically, i.e. from the ex cathedra position that the intervening centuries can offer us and from the diachronic perspective of the religious outsider—let us call this the macroscopic analysis.[1] On a microscopic level, epiphanies serve a number of primary and secondary functions for both the individual perceiver(s) and the extended community that hosts them. For purposes of concision and cohesion, the various functions can be reduced to three major categories: a) epiphanies that provide an explanation, an *aition* as the Greeks called it; b) epiphanies that invest their perceivers with god-sent authority, validity, or legitimation; and, finally, c) epiphanies that function as a crisis management tool.

The last mentioned category (henceforth referred to as the crisis management function) is more or less self-explanatory: epiphanies that take place at a critical moment often provide their perceivers with an effective tool to deal with the crisis itself—even if this crisis is only momentarily created, and its sole raison d'être is to

[1] This distinction presupposes that our perception of the different functions may not necessarily be identical to how the Greeks themselves perceived the functional role of their epiphanies. It is necessary to be aware of this, in order to guard ourselves against misleading anachronisms and methodological fallacies.

be fashioned so as to be resolved in ritual terms. The first category (henceforth referred to as the explanatory function) includes epiphanies that elucidate the paradoxical coexistence of prima facie incompatible events or experiences and provide these events or experiences with a culturally meaningful cause–effect relationship. In other words, this category comprises narratives wherein events or experiences that previously seemed unrelated now, in the light of an epiphanic manifestation, seem causally bound together. In the second category (henceforth referred to as the authoritative function) belong epiphanies that support an individual's or a community's claims on divine favouritism or knowledge of the divine will, and, therefore, provide their perceivers with authorization to proceed with certain courses of action.

The aforementioned categories, conceptually distinct though they may be, often feature jointly in the same narrative. For instance, an epiphany may endow an individual with authority to decide on the appropriate course of action and the ensuing decision, in turn, may provide the decisive resolution for a crisis. Alternatively, an epiphany that provided the resolution to a crisis may have also provided the *aition* for the establishment of an annual festival, as is often the case in our narratives. It is usually possible, nevertheless, to discern within the narrative itself some extra emphasis given to one or two of the categories listed above, and only rarely to all three of them. The ensuing detailed discussion of each of these categories will illuminate this premise further.

EPIPHANIES AS CRISIS MANAGEMENT TOOLS

I start the discussion with the functional category of epiphanies as crisis management tools primarily because it is more self-explanatory than the other two. Epiphanies may be both generated by a crisis (as chapters 2 and 3 have shown) and may generate a crisis themselves (as chapters 4, 5, and 6 made clear). In either case, epiphanies provide authorization to an individual or a group to resolve the crisis. This resolution is captured and preserved in the cultural memory of the community by being commemorated in a festival context. Given this close correlation between the manifestation of a deity and a moment of crisis, it is hardly surprising that epiphanies operating as crisis management tools form the most numerous functional category of the three. Epiphanies which take place in a crisis context (especially in warfare, illness, and travelling contexts), with the possible exception of the cases discussed under the explanatory and authoritative sub-categories, function as crisis management tools, and fall, therefore, under the current rubric.

However, even those other epiphanies that take place in a cultic context could also be thought of as crisis management tools, in so far as they served as a means for dealing with a former or a future crisis by means of ritual performance. Ritual enactment may resolve a long-gone crisis by recreating it in the eyes of the participants and subsequently resolving it. Alternatively, ritual performance may force the participants to practise and rehearse an appropriate emotional response for a forthcoming crisis—such as death and disease for all humans.

A large group of epiphanic festivals, for instance, were instituted to commemorate a deity's deliverance of a community from a crisis, such as a siege, a plague, lawlessness, uncivilized life, famine, drought, etc.[2] Festivals of this kind often featured re-enactments of the crisis that took place in the past. The reader may be reminded of the annual festival in Tanagra, which commemorated the community's deliverance from a plague by Hermes Kriophoros. The festival comprised of a re-enactment of that former crisis, which was subsequently resolved by means of ritual dramatization: the local ephebe, who having been assimilated to the popular image of the god went around the city walls carrying a ram on his shoulders, thus evoking in the memory of the community Hermes' original divine intervention.[3]

Other advent festivals (examined in chapter 6 as a sub-category of epiphanic festivals) also featured a re-enactment of a crisis that took place in *illo tempore* and involved this time a deity that was abused, ignored, or misunderstood by the human perceivers, or a deity that disappeared for a limited period of time. Such was the case in the annual festival of Tonaia in Samos, where a mock-stealing, abusing, and eventually propitiating of the goddess Hera in the form of her statue took place. Similarly, in the yearly festival of Agrionia in Chaeronea the women re-enacted Dionysus' original disappearance (an event with potentially hazardous consequences for the community) by conducting a ritual search, and resolved the crisis by saying that the god went away with the Muses.[4] Finally, we should not forget these other advent festivals, such as the Delphic Theophania and the several *kataploi* and *katagōgia* festivals, which aimed primarily at regulating an epiphanic deity's seasonal appearances by confining his or her epiphany within the prescribed dates and place of the festival.[5]

In fact, the common denominator in the majority of the epiphanic festivals discussed in chapter 6 is the community's desire to regulate the spatio-temporal context of the deity's epiphany and thus predict and direct its outcome. Regulating the epiphanic context and form and embedding it safely within the relatively innocuous context of periodic civic festivities means essentially reducing, if not eliminating, the suddenness and the potentially traumatic (or even destructive) aspect of epiphany. It goes without saying that this is also an effective way of prolonging its positive impact for the community. Thus, the community could enjoy a risk-free period of beneficent proximity with the divine and could prolong the divine protection and blessing that resulted from the original sudden divine revelation that was usually of limited duration. More importantly, in the heart of these festivals lies the concept of 'epiphany as a matter of reciprocal communication', to put it in Ian Rutherford's words: commemorating a former epiphany was a good way to reassure the epiphanic deity that the community will never forget the divine assistance received in the past, and will be grateful for any assistance they

[2] See the discussion in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[3] Paus. 9.22.1–2 with Larson (2007, 148).

[4] Tonaia: Menodotus of Samos *FGrHist* 541 F2; Agrionia: Plut. *Mor*. 716f–717a. More on these festivals in chapter 6, 'Playing hide and seek with the divine'.

[5] Of which see more in chapter 6.

will receive in the future.[6] In other words, every time the original divine manifestation was commemorated within the cultic context of a festival, ties between the deity and the community were renewed and the community thus secured active divine protection and sustenance for any emergencies that might occur in the near future.

Furthermore, festivals of this type were unique opportunities for the body politic to advertise their good old civic values and enhance their city's religious and political profile. In that sense, these epiphanic festivals also functioned as effective means of safeguarding the community against a potential crisis of depoliticization. In both re-enacting a crisis of the past and rehearsing for a crisis of the future, communities strived to control the uncontrollable, domesticating the other, eliminating the possibility of an internal crisis (i.e. between the members of the same community), or an external one (i.e. between the members of the community and the tutelary or visiting deities), or both.

So far we have established that epiphanies in a festive context could also function as means of resolving a civic crisis. But what about the individual? Chapter 3 dealt with epiphanies as diagnostic and therapeutic tools. The epiphanies, primarily (but not exclusively) of healing deities such as Asclepius, functioned as a means of dealing with the crisis of the individual. The same chapter looked at the close links between the Athenian cults of Asclepius, the new saviour god (*theos sōtēr*), and the cult of Demeter and Kore, 'the saviours of old' in Parker's words.[7] This appropriation of the new cult by the older one can be explained partly by the similarities between healing process and mystic initiation in the sense that both would have involved life-changing experiences that aimed at helping their devotees with managing life-threatening situations, namely disease and death.

Furthermore, chapter 6 supported the idea that epiphanies were an integral part of the initiatory process of certain mystery cults such as the mysteries of Demeter at Eleusis and the mysteries of Dionysus as they can be partially reconstructed from the golden *lamellae* found in Thurioi, Thessaly, and elsewhere. Given the prominent eschatological content of both cults and the most commonly held view of mystic initiation as a preparation for death, I also suggested that in all probability the ritual acts of these specific cults involved a pre-enactment of the only crisis that every human being is bound to experience at some point in their life, namely death. As part of rehearsing for this major and inescapable crisis, the initiates were probably given glimpses of the afterlife, a central part of which was likely a ritual pre-enactment of their direct confrontation with a deity of the underworld, such as Persephone, Dionysus, Euboulos (or Eubouleus), etc.

In conclusion, in festivals and mystery cults, both the recreated crisis of the past and the rehearsed crisis of the future are constructed and resolved by means of ritual performance. The first, that is the recreated crisis within an epiphanic festival context, targets primarily the community as a whole, while the rehearsing for a future crisis involving a deity, e.g. of the underworld, primarily targets the

[6] Rutherford (2001b, 40). [7] Parker (1988, 147).

individual, with the notable exception of the festivals with a dual structure that target both at different stages.

Apart from festivals and mystery cults, other cultic epiphanies that perhaps take place in a crisis context may have a prophylactic character. Compare here the Spartan law that prescribed that one of the Tyndaridae should accompany one of the two kings in his military expeditions, while the other ought to stay at home with the other king, perhaps so as to prevent a civic crisis. That carrying the images of the Dioscuri on campaign was considered by the Spartan army to be an epiphany becomes evident from Simonides' poetic description of the Dioscuri riding out with the Spartans, as part of their routine start of a military campaign rather than a crisis, at the battle of Plataea (perhaps in the form of their *effigies*).[8] Some of the stratagematic epiphanies can also be perceived as aiming at preventing a crisis on the battlefield.

This is especially true for the quasi-epiphanies fabricated for morale purposes—that is, those created to raise the spirit of an army before a battle takes place—such as that constructed by the Spartan Archidamos, who prior to the battle of Dipaia (467 BC) created the impression that the Spartan army would enjoy a divine alliance by staging a *pars pro toto* Dioscuri epiphany; or the Theban Epaminondas who staged a Herakles' *pars pro toto* epiphany to raise the spirits of the Theban army, which was frozen with terror and awe at the sight of the experienced Spartans.[9] Stratagems, as a whole, functioned a bit like instant crisis management tools: add the right epiphanic context along with the right epiphanic form—in both of the previous examples, battle goes well with *pars pro toto*, which by definition is an economic way of constructing an epiphany, since it does not require too many resources—and mix it all with a bit of ingenuity; what you have is an instant fabricated epiphany that may provide a resolution to a crisis just as well as a non-fabricated epiphany. In other words, epiphanic stratagems achieved the same effect as the 'genuine' epiphanies by means of imitating the context and the form of divine manifestations, as established in the public cultural consciousness, and by manipulating the public's need for and expectations of divine intervention and deliverance.

There are, however, cases of epiphanic stratagems where the epiphanic schema seems to have been exploited not to the benefit of the community but to the advantage of an individual who abused it to facilitate his quest for political power (e.g. Peisistratus in the Herodotean narrative; Alexander the pseudo-prophet in Lucian's narrative), or to satisfy his sexual needs (e.g. Decius Mundus as Anubis in Josephus' narrative and Alexander the pseudo-prophet when he used his fake mysteries to satisfy his appetite for both women and boys).

[8] Hdt. 3.75 with Hornblower (2001, 140). On context, see the relevant discussion in chapter 2, 'Persian wars'; on form, see chapter 1, '*Effigies* epiphany'.

[9] Polyaen. 1.41.1; Diod. Sic. 15.53.2–4. Detailed discussions of the passage can be found in the relevant sections of chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?' and chapter 1, '*Pars pro toto* epiphany'.

EXPLANATORY FUNCTION: EPIPHANIES AND MAKING SENSE OF THE WORLD

ἐμοὶ δὲ θαυμάσαι
θεῶν τελεσάντων οὐδέν ποτε φαίνεται
ἔμμεν ἄπιστον.

Pindar, *Pythian* 10.48–50

'With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.'

Matthew 19:21

The explanatory function corresponds, to a certain extent, to what the Greeks called *aitia* (τὰ αἴτια). An *aition* (usually τὸ αἴτιον, more rarely ἡ αἰτία) is a narrative that provides its readers with the reasons behind, the cause of, or the origins of a curious cult practice, a cult, a festival, a statue, certain athletic contests, or even the origins of a city.[10] The cultural metaphor the Greeks used to express their thirst for knowledge was finding the origins of things, their beginnings, their *aitia*. It is remarkable how many of the stories about the beginnings of their world order—especially their cultic one—involved some kind of divine manifestation of a deity. For one thing, epiphany occupies a pivotal place in Panhellenic aetiologies for the cults of Demeter at Eleusis, or Apollo at Delphi, as articulated in the corresponding Homeric hymns.[11] The Greeks themselves used epiphanies to make sense of their cultic world. It is only reasonable, then, to identify the explanatory function as a major functional category the Greeks themselves used to think about epiphanic revelations: the establishment of a cult, a festival, a statue, temples, even athletic games in honour of a deity was, in this view, quite often instigated by a divine manifestation.

Plato's grievances in his *Laws* regarding the Athenians' willingness to respond immediately to epiphanic revelations are indicative of a culture's readiness to follow the cultic protocol of reciprocal exchange: the Athenians tended to dedicate whatever happened to be at hand, and to establish new shrines, altars, and sacrifices, after having been prompted to do so by divine visions perceived in their dreams or their waking reality.[12] This practice was by no means peculiar to the Athenians. Athenaeus, while quoting Timaeus of Tauromenium, reports a charming anecdote about a group of revelling youths in Acragas, who in their

[10] On the Greek habit of speculating about the origins of things see Pl. *Hp. Mai.* 285d with Dougherty (1993, 15). The definition of *aition* and *aitia* in Plato and Aristotle is, of course, a whole different matter, on which see the discussion in Deslauriers (2007, esp. 43–112) with more bibliography. On a healthy appetite for *aitia* in the inscriptions and the philosophical discourse of the Hellenistic era see the introductory section in Chaniotis (1988) and Hankinson (1999, 480–1) respectively.

[11] For a general discussion of the centrality of epiphanies as *aitia* in establishing new cults (of Panhellenic stature) in general see Garland (1992) and Sowa (1984, 236–80); in the Homeric hymns see Parker (1991, 2). Clay (1989, 267ff.) reads the Homeric hymns as 'documents containing some of the most sustained and systematic theological speculation of the Archaic period'; contra Garćia (2002, 4ff.). On *aitia* for the institution of new cults as presented in Greek tragedy, see Allan (2004).

[12] Plat. *Leg.* 10.909e–910a and 5.738b–c. Cf. also *Epin.* 10.909e–910a. Mikalson (2010, 43–109 and 242–51) provides the reader with an informative exposition of how Greek philosophers commented on the religion of the hoi polloi.

drunkenness thought that they were experiencing a terrible sea storm and caused havoc with their neighbours when they started throwing their bedding and furniture out of their house in their attempt to save the ship that they thought they occupied.[13] The following morning the city's chief officials turned up on their doorstep to charge them for causing so much trouble. The youths, who were still heavily drunk and under the impression that they were still aboard, solemnly greeted the officials as if they had encountered the epiphany of some naval divinities and the eldest of them even promised to dedicate altars to them to reciprocate for their salvific epiphany at their moment of crisis:

> '*ἂν λιμένος*' *ἔφη* '*τύχωμεν ἀπαλλαγέντες τοσούτου κλύδωνος, Σωτῆρας ὑμᾶς ἐπιφανεῖς μετὰ τῶν θαλασσίων δαιμόνων ἐν τῇ πατρίδι ἱδρυσόμεθα, ὡς αἰσίως ἡμῖν ἐπιφανέντας.*'
>
> 'If we reach the harbour', he said, 'and we manage to escape this storm, to you as manifest saviours and to the other sea divinities we will set up altars, since you have manifested yourselves to us so auspiciously.'

This anecdote may have been injected with generous doses of humorous hyperbole, but it is, nonetheless, indicative of the basic thought process behind the numerous analogous dedications we find all over the Greek-speaking world. All around the Greek-speaking world, epiphanies triggered the establishment of shrines, temples, altars (and other sacred buildings of all sorts), sacrifices, festivals, athletic contests, new cults, and even new cities.[14]

A typical example of a divine manifestation serving an explanatory function can be found, as discussed in the Introduction, in the Herodotean report of Pan's 'rustic' epiphany on Mount Parthenion, which took place while Pheidippides was on his way back to Athens from Sparta.[15] His encounter with the god constitutes the *aition* for the introduction of the cult of Pan, the god of panic, in Athens. Now, one may reasonably argue that this is an epiphany that functioned also as a crisis management tool—a rather successful one, if we are to judge from the result of the battle—since it soothed the tension and the disappointment that the Spartan denial of an immediate military alliance had created.

So which one is it? Did this epiphany function as an *aition*, i.e. an explanation for the introduction of Pan's cult to the acropolis, or did it function as a crisis management tool? Probably both. On a microscopic level, both narratives that include the divine manifestation (that is both Herodotus and Pausanias) lay extra emphasis not so much on the event itself as on its reporting to the Athenians and its impact on enriching the city's cultic life.[16] On a macroscopic level, Pan's revealing himself and promising divine alliance on the battlefield was 'a way of explaining how *phobos*, which we might appropriately render as panic, descended

[13] Timaeus of Tauromenium (*FGrHist* 566 F 149) = Athen. *Deipn.* 2.37b–e Olson.

[14] That was the case, for instance of the re-foundation of Smyrna. This second foundation of the city was allegedly instigated by the epiphany of the two Nemeseis, who appeared in Alexander's dream. See Fig. 4.1 and the relevant discussion in chapter 4.

[15] The Greek text is not illuminating on this issue. Garland (1992, 52), on the other hand, argues convincingly that this was the case. For different views on the subject see Borgeaud (1988, 95) and my discussion in chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies'.

[16] Cf. Hdt. 6.105; Paus. 1.28.4; Paus. 8.54.6 (discussed in the Introduction). In Herodotus' account there is certainly extra emphasis on the fact that the Athenians as a community accepted Pheidippides' report as truth.

not upon the vastly outnumbered Athenians, as logically one might expect, but instead upon the vastly superior Persians'.[17] In fact, as Borgeaud has shown, assuming that the phobic god had appeared and intervened in the course of a battle or a siege proved to be quite an effective heuristic tool in many of the extraordinary events or experiences that were reported as having taken place in the Persian wars and beyond.[18] Pan's presence, for instance, was presupposed in order to explain away Polyzelus' continuous fighting at Marathon despite him being blinded by a gigantic *phasma*, the Persian massacre at Psyttaleia, the defeat of the panic-stricken besiegers of Thrasyboulos and his team, and the slaughter of the attacking Gauls at Delphi.[19] One, then, would not be far from the truth if one were to remark that Pan frequented the battlefields of the Greek-speaking world, either in hybridic form (half animal–half human) or in his amorphous manifestation as *panikos*.[20]

Equally manifest in a war and siege context were the north wind god Boreas and the bellicose Dioscuri, who along with the standard poliadic deities (i.e. Athena, Artemis, Apollo, and Zeus) lent a hand to the communities who invoked them.[21] Their numerous manifestations prompted the establishment of an impressive number of religious festivals and dedications, such as the annual Boreasmoi at Megalopolis and Thurioi, the annual Dioskoureia at Sparta, the quadrennial Eleutheria celebrated in honour of the Panhellenic Zeus Eleutherios in Plataea and the festivals that were celebrated in honour of Artemis under the different cult epithets of Agrotera (Marathon), Aristoboule (Salamis), and Phosphoros (Mounychia). Similarly, the Panhellenic Soteria in Delphi; the annual Nikephoria in Pergamon, the Parthenia festival in Crimean Chersonesos, along with the Panamereia in Stratonikeia were also said to have been instigated by the divine epiphanies of the community's tutelary deities in moments of crisis. In most cases, these epiphanic festivals were accompanied by lavish sacrifices (e.g. the festival in honour of Zeus Ammon at Aphytis in Chalkidike) and prestigious athletic contests (e.g. the Panamereia festival in Carian Stratonikeia).[22]

These epiphanic manifestations became the *aitia*, the reasons behind the introduction of the festivals, sacrifices, and athletic contests. On rarer occasions, however, the manifestation of a deity, whose cult was already well established in the local community, gave rise not to the establishment of a new festival, but to the upgrading or the revival of an older one.[23] This was the case, for example, with Artemis Mounychia, who already enjoyed an imposing sanctuary at the top of the Mounychia hill overlooking Salamis. Nonetheless, when the goddess manifested herself in the form of a full moon at a time of need, her sacred annual festival, the

[17] Garland (1992, 53). [18] Borgeaud (1988, 88–129).

[19] Marathon: Suda, s.v. Hippias (iota.545); Psyttaleia: Paus.1 36.2; Aesch. *Pers*. 441–59; Thrasyboulos: Diod. Sic. 14.32.1–3; Gauls at Delphi: Paus. 10.23.1–9.

[20] More on Pan as a hybrid in Aston (2011) and chapter 4, 'Epiphanic Pan'.

[21] Boreas and Dioscuri: chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'; Athena, Artemis, and Zeus as poliadic deities: chapter 2.

[22] Paus. 3.18.3; Plut. *Lys*. 20.4–6. More examples in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[23] This practice of upgrading the local tutelary deity and his/her sacred festival to a Panhellenic level becomes, from the Hellenistic times onwards, the main desideratum and a sine qua non in the inter-city states diplomatic discourse. This is, of course, yet another 'strategy of self-representation', as Chaniotis calls it. More on this topic in Chaniotis (2005, esp. 163–5).

Mounychia, gained further prestige and publicity. As a parallel, we may also consider here the revival of the prestigious Ionic festival of Delia after 426 BC to commemorate what the Athenians thought to be Apollo's role in ending the plague of 430.[24]

More importantly, these epiphanic manifestations instigated the introduction of new cults, whose introduction was almost invariably commemorated by the establishment of a temple or a sanctuary (e.g. that of Boreas near Ilissos; or that of Artemis Agrotera at Aigeira),[25] a statue (e.g. that of Artemis Soteira at Megara; or that of Hecate in Byzantion);[26] or a shrine. By 'new cult', I do not necessarily suggest that the cult of a specific deity was previously, as a whole, unknown to the community. It is rather the introduction of the cult into the civic pantheon, cult calendar, and complex of religious artefacts that I have in mind. Pan's cult and its introduction into the civic calendar of Athens can elucidate this premise further: Pan's cult was, in all likelihood, already known to the Athenian country dwellers; yet, it was Pan's epiphany in 490 and his promise of divine support prior to the battle of Marathon that opened the way for establishing the god's shrine on the sacred slope of the acropolis, the annual sacrificial offerings, and the Paneia festival, as well as the annual torch race in his honour. In other words, it was Pan's epiphany to Pheidippides that heralded his ascendancy in the Athenian civic pantheon and cultic calendar. Equally, the reader may recall that Boreas' cult was already known to the Athenians from at least 492 BC, when the north wind god unleashed his fury upon Dareios' naval force near Mount Athos.[27] But it was his manifestation of power in 480 (in Salamis and Artemision) that granted him popularity among the Athenians and a sanctuary beside the river Ilissos, at the point where they believed that he had abducted the Nymph Oreithyia.[28]

Nonetheless, other narratives, like those which report the epiphanies of the snake-like heroes Kychreus and Sosipolis—both of whom manifested their snake-like bodies in a battle context: at Salamis and Elis respectively—account for manifestations that took place on the battlefield, or indeed in other crisis contexts, and functioned as *aitia* for the establishment of previously unattested cults.[29] Epiphanies of Asclepius, an initially highly localized healing deity, are good illustrations of epiphany's function as cult dispatcher. Asclepius' cult was at first restricted to either Trikka or Epidaurus. It was not long, though, before rich and powerful individuals from all around the Greek-speaking world visited these renowned Asclepieia and, having themselves experienced a personal encounter

[24] More on this topic in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'. For Apollo's role in the plague see the discussion in chapter 3, 'Apollo and Asclepius: private and public aspects of disease'.

[25] Boreas: Paus. 1.19.5; Artemis Agrotera: Paus. 7.26.1–4.

[26] Artemis Soteira: Paus. 1.40.2–3; Hecate: Hesychius of Miletus, *FHistGr* 390 F1,26.

[27] Hdt. 6.44, with Garland (1992, 71).

[28] Cf. Pl. *Phdr*. 229b–d. On the political character of this myth and in general on early Athenian myths being distinctively political, see Parker (1987), where also the importance of these myths for the formation of the Athenian cultural identity is underlined.

[29] Paus. 1.36.1 and 6.20.1–5. The first manifestation resulted in the building of a sanctuary in honour of the hero Kychreus at Salamis—still visible in Pausanias' day—and the second in the establishment of the cult of the hero Sosipolis and a joint temple sacred to both Sosipolis and his mother Eileithyia. On these narratives see also chapter 2, 'Battle epiphanies' and chapter 1, 'Reptilian epiphanies'. On Sosipolis and Kychreus see also Ogden (2013, 247–70).

with the healing deity, took the initiative of introducing Asclepius to their respective cities. Such were, for instance, the cases of Telemachos (either an Athenian or an Epidaurian),[30] of Nicagora of Sikyon, of Thersandros of Halieis, and of Archias of Pergamon, who having personally been benefited by an encounter with the god decided subsequently to import the cult and introduce it to their native communities.[31]

Things were slightly different in Naupaktos, where initially the god manifested his godhead not to Phalysios, the founder of the cult, but to the poetess Anyte, who had been sent off to visit Epidaurus on behalf of the partially blind man.[32] The woman woke up thinking that the god's epiphany was simply a meaningless dream (without a doubt some dreams of similar content must have been inconsequential), but her initial impression was radically altered when she found a tangible proof of the god's visitation: a letter from the god himself addressed to the sick man.[33] Anyte took the letter to Phalysios, who was cured of his blindness as soon as he opened the letter. It was that Phalysios who consequently decided to commemorate his successful healing and honour the god by founding his temple in Naupaktos. Phalysios' case aside, Asclepius' epiphanies to each of these rich and powerful individuals was the result of their private *theōria* to the Epidaurian Asklepieion; and it was these epiphanies which triggered Asclepius' introduction into the civic pantheon and sacred calendar of their cities. In other words, Asclepius' epiphanies were thought of as the *aitia* for the introduction of the cult to the new recipient communities.

Nonetheless, at times the founder of a new cult was said to have enjoyed an even more intimate relationship with the deity he introduced: he was either the lover of a god or their offspring, the product of an erotic union with a mortal.[34] Such was the case with the institution of Semele's cult at Thebes and the cult of Rheo/Hemithea in Chersonesos. Semele's union with Zeus led both to her death and her heroization, while Apollo's erotic epiphany to Rheo resulted in the establishment of the cult of Hemithea, who (as mentioned in chapter 4) became one of the major healing deities of the Chersonesos.[35] Alternatively, an erotic epiphany may have been used to explain a peculiar feature of some ritual process or a priestly *genos* or family. Dionysus' amatory epiphany to Ariadne, for instance, formed the *aition* behind the annual ritual *hieros gamos* of the god (represented in the actual ritual union by his statue or his priest) with the wife of the *basileus* in Athens;[36] while Herakles' sexual encounter with Thestios' daughters provided the *aition* for the peculiar prerequisite of lifelong virginity for the god's priestess in Thespiae.[37]

[30] Athenian: Garland (1992, 118); Epidaurian: Jameson (1999, 49–51).

[31] Nicagora: Paus. 2.10.3; Thersandros: *IG* IV^2, 1, 121–2, B33; Archias: Paus. 2.26.8. On the distinction between private and public theoric journeys see the introductory chapter in Wilson-Nightingale (2004, chs 3–4) and (2005).

[32] Paus. 10.38.13.

[33] On dream epiphany and the debate (ancient and modern) on its truthfulness see Harris (2009, chs 1 and 3).

[34] As shown in chapter 5.

[35] Diod. Sic. 5.62.1–6. Note the familiar formula: *διὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γενομένην ἐπιφάνειαν*.

[36] More on this topic in chapter 5.

[37] Paus. 9.27.6. Thestios was the eponymous hero of Thespiae. It might be of some importance that in the rest of the narrative, not quoted here, Pausanias expresses his disbelief in either version of the story.

Even so, one may be tempted to read in Herakles' erotic epiphany an attempt on behalf of the female members of the *genos* of Thestiadae to claim a kind of congenital affinity to the hero and, thus, remain in exclusive control of the god's cult and its priesthood.

In fact, a similar explanatory function can be detected in several other epiphanic narratives that provide the *aition* for a clan's exclusive control over a cult and its priesthood. In the majority of these narratives the deity manifests itself to the *genos* leader (who subsequently becomes the eponymous hero) to provide the decisive resolution to a crisis; in return (s)he demands to be honoured in a very specific way: either with the periodic celebration of mystic rites that (s)he has taught the leader, or by claiming a member of his family as the first priest(ess). The epiphany of Mother Dindymene to Themistocles, as reported by Plutarch, is a typical example of these narratives.[38] The goddess appeared in a moment of crisis and saved him from falling into the ambush of the armed Pisidians who were plotting Themistocles' death; as a reward, she very explicitly asked for his daughter, Mnesiptolema, to become her priestess. The *theophilēs* ('dear to the gods, god-favoured') Athenian reciprocated generously for this divine help by building a temple and establishing mystic rites, presided over by his own daughter, in honour of Mother Dindymene.[39] It goes without saying that debating the historicity of this narrative is of no particular significance. Did the goddess appear in Themistocles' dream? Was this a mere fable which originated from the members of the priestly personnel or Themistocles' sons? The precise amount of historical truth behind the tradition is not the main issue here. What does matter is the underpinning belief: in the collective memory and cultural tradition of the people of Magnesia the epiphany of the goddess was an integral part of the foundation legend of the temple, which remained renowned until the relocation of the city.

Demeter's *xenismos* at Eleusis and Athens is also relevant: at a moment of major crisis, as famine is, the goddess manifested her godhead to her Eleusinian host (named variably Keleos, Eleusinios, Eleusis, etc.)[40] and revealed her mysteries to him or to members of his family. Demeter's epiphany functioned not only as the foundation story of the cult, but also provided the *aition* behind the privileges Keleos' children enjoyed in relation to the cult. By the same token, Demeter's *xenismos* by Phytalos at Athens provided for the Phytalidae the *aition* behind privileges analogous to the ones given to the Kerykes and Eumolpidai;[41] while the *xenismos* of Herakles and his father, Zeus Philios, provided the *aition* for the right of the Athenian *parasitoi* to partake in 'divine' banquets.[42]

The narratives discussed above may have given the false impression that claim to a divine epiphany as the prime motivation for the foundation of a new cult guaranteed the cult's positive reception, i.e. the community's unanimous

[38] Plut. *Them.* 30.1–6.

[39] For a detailed discussion of both the literary and the material evidence for this cult and its popularity in the Greek-speaking world see Borgeaud (2004, 1–90) and Munn (2006, esp. ch. 2).

[40] For the different names of Demeter's host in the different narratives see chapter 7, 'Demeter's *parousia* and political rivalry'.

[41] As shown in chapter 6, 'Epiphanic festivals'.

[42] More on this topic in chapter 7, 'Twin guests and Heraklean feasts'.

acceptance and even gratitude.[43] This, however, was not always the case: Themistocles' introduction of the previously unattested cult of Artemis Aristoboule, for example, and his founding a temple in her honour near his house at the deme of Melite, was met with a certain degree of suspicion and public disparagement.[44] The temple, which hosted an image of Themistocles portrayed in most heroic fashion, had been established to commemorate his successful decoding of the Pythian oracle and his insistence on fighting in the secluded area of Salamis. One can only speculate on the political or cultural reasons behind reinterpreting the naval triumph of 480 not as one man's personal achievement, but as the illuminating epiphany of Artemis Aristoboule.[45] But few would doubt that the Athenians may have detected an element of extreme self-assurance, or even an element of arrogance, in the cult epithet Aristoboule ('of the best decision' or 'the best counsellor'), which provoked and outraged them.[46]

Themistocles was not alone. Extra care had to be taken when introducing previously unattested cults. This was particularly true when importing non-Greek or highly localized Greek deities (such as the Arcadian Pan or the Epidaurian Asclepius). The danger of an unfriendly reception was ever present and was further intensified in those cases where the newly introduced deity's sphere of influence clashed with that of a native deity and one already firmly embedded in the civic pantheon.[47] The two standard ways of enabling the gradual insertion of a foreign deity and effectively facilitating his or her introduction into any given polytheistic system were either: a) to identify the newcomer with an already well-established deity, or b) to provide *xenia* and treat the deity as a guest, a *xenos* who is in need of a temporary abode. This second way of progressively familiarizing a community with a newcomer god by providing him with ritual *hypodochē* and *xenia* is exemplified by Asclepius' temporary *dexiōsis* at Demon's house (an Athenian who offered his own house as the god's residence, provided that he would be awarded the priesthood); as well as in the god's *dexiōsis* at the house of Sophocles (for which the poet was rewarded with the cult title Dexion) before Asclepius' cult was awarded state patronage in Athens.[48]

[43] E.g. Wickkiser (2008, 76): 'The placement of Asklepios' sanctuary on land highly desirable, restricted and regulated, combined with the careful orchestration of his arrival with the cult of Eleusinian Demeter, indicates a major civic commitment to the importation of Asklepios.'

[44] Plut. *Them*. 22.1–3; Plut. *Malign. Hdt*. 37 = *Mor*. 869c–d.

[45] On Artemis' connection with light, advance intellectual capacity, and effective problem-solving in warfare, see chapter 2, 'Look at the bright side of war! The illuminating epiphanies of Artemis, Hekate, and Parthenos'.

[46] Perhaps they interpreted that cult epithet as a hybristic overstatement and scornful comparison to Artemis Boulaia, whose temple stood near the Agora. Cf. also Garland (1992, 76): 'Many Athenians must have felt that Themistocles was trying to upstage the state's own goddess, by appropriating for his own personal use her brighter and more dynamic counterpart. It may have seemed that he wanted to intimate that his own counsel was more effective that the collective wisdom of the Demos, the Boule, or even the Areopagus.'

[47] See for instance Versnel (1990, 102ff.) for cases of unfriendly reception and even hostility towards the introduction of a new god in Athens in the fifth century.

[48] Demon: *IG* II^2 4969, an inscription that was found in the Asty Asklepieion. Apparently Demon must have been the second in line, right after Telemachos, priest of Asclepius. Sophocles: *Etym. Magn*. s.v. δεξίων. According to Körte (1896, 287–332), Sophocles accommodated the Epidaurian symbol of the god's presence not in his own house, but in the sanctuary of the healing hero Amynos, where he was

Similarly, a certain Sosinike entertained Sarapis and Isis (a divine pair of Egyptian origin) at her house at the city of Opus and thus provided the god with a temporary dwelling until his permanent abode was ready;[49] whilst a certain Apollonios provided temporary shelter for the same divine couple in Delos, presumably in some privately funded building.[50] In both of the aforementioned cases, the ὑποδοχή, the ritual receiving and entertainment of the god Sarapis, was explicitly requested by the god himself, who manifested his godhead and his divine will, in the first case, in the dreams of Xenainetos from Opus while he practised incubation in the Serapeion of Thessalonike and, in the second case, in the dreams of Apollonios himself. This simple fact of the deity actively seeking to propagate his or her cult and expand its religious clientele creates a stark contrast between Sarapis' two *xenismoi*, and the *xenia* powerful individuals offered to Asclepius out of their own accord, as a gift, a χαριστήριον, so as to reciprocate for the divine healing they experienced.[51]

Or so it seems, prima facie. A closer look at these narratives soon reveals that the individuals who propagated the official introduction of the cult of Isis and Sarapis in their cities were said to have received a personal invitation by the god himself to do so. These invitations were often delivered while the mortal cult bringer was fast asleep and were materialized in the form of what is commonly referred to as *Himmelsbriefe*, i.e. letters from the sky. They contained detailed instructions concerning the establishment of his publicly sponsored temple,[52] but, more importantly, they were riddled with hints as to the difficulties and initial resistance these individuals encountered in the process of advertising the introduction of these Egyptian divinities into the civic pantheon of their native cities. However, these hardships were dealt with once and for all via the subsequent

serving as a priest. If this was so, then we could possibly discern here a combination of both tactics of domesticating a foreign deity: first Asclepius was identified with a native deity with an analogous sphere of interests and secondly he was given temporary shelter in this native deity's sanctuary until a more permanent abode was built in his honour.

[49] *IG* X,2 1 255 (*c.*1st cent. AD) with Sokolowski (1974, 441–2); note the emphatic repetition of the verb ὑποδέχεσθαι in lines 5 and 17. The term ὑποδοχή (denoting ritual reception) appears also in a Hadrianic inscription from the Athenian Asclepieion (*IG* II^2 3195 with Aleshire 1991, 101–3) which records Asclepius' reception by a certain Demetrios from Gargettos. On the notion of ritual *hypodochē* see also chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?'. Aretalogies are composed either as a hymn in the second or third person singular or as an epiphanic utterance of the deity in the first person (e.g. Apul. *Met.* 11.5). Isis, Serapis, Osiris, and other 'Egyptian' deities were the usual recipients of aretalogies. For a general discussion of aretalogies, their generic context, and origins, see Reinach (1885), Longo (1969), Assmann (1975), Smith (1996, 3–27), and Baumgarten (1998, 196–218). On Isiac aretalogies, see Bergman (1968), Merkelbach (1995), and Dunand (2000); on Sarapis, see Engelmann (1975). Some of them are preserved on Greek inscriptions (from Andros, Cyme, Ios, and Thessalonica) and others in literary accounts like those of Strabo (17.1.17), Diodorus (1.27), and Apuleius. They are dated roughly between the first century BC and the second century AD. Some of these aretalogies refer back to a stele from Memphis, a fact that has triggered a controversy amongst the scholarly community as to whether these documents are of Greek or Egyptian origin. Currently, most scholars regard this debate as deeply unhelpful and outdated. More on this debate in Papanikolaou (2009) and Dieleman and Moyer (2010, 443–6).

[50] *IG* XI 4, 1299 with Engelmann (1975, 37).

[51] For this notion of a gift given to a god in response to a miraculous healing or indeed help provided in any other moment of crisis see Plat. *Leg.* 10.909e–910a Burnet with Versnel (1981, 42–62).

[52] On *Himmelsbriefe* as a typical element of Hellenistic aretalogies see Chaniotis (1988, 68–9).

continuum of epiphanies of the divine newcomers in the dream visions of their devotees, and above all via these *Himmelsbriefen*, these divine *epistulae*, which were in turn interpreted as tangible proofs of the gods' taking a personal interest in the cities and their readiness to fight for their place in the cultic life of the community. In essence, representing the divine as taking the initiative for the dissemination of their cult may well have been another trick up their votaries' sleeve.

On the whole, we have established that Greeks employed epiphany as a heuristic tool. They employed epiphanies to postulate on and explain away several *permanent* features of their cultic life: festivals, cults, temples, statues, etc. We have also demonstrated that epiphanies proved to be an extremely useful conceptual tool when it came to interpreting peculiar aspects or features of their cultic life, such as the reasons why the priestess in the temple of Sosipolis attended to the god's needs whilst covered in a veil, or why the priestess of Thestios needed to abstain from sexual activity for as long as she retains her priesthood. However, epiphanies were also used to make sense of major or minor extraordinary *hapax* cultic events, such as the unusual readiness with which sacrificial animals offered themselves up for sacrifice. The voluntary sacrifice of the black heifer in the annual festival of Phersephattia in Cyzicus, as well as the wilfulness with which the *hiereion* in the annual epiphanic festival of Zeus Panamaros offered itself to the god, are good illustrations of this. Both incidents were interpreted as manifestations of divine power and therefore as epiphanies of the respective deities.[53]

Talking of *hapax* ritual and political events which were said to have been instigated by divine epiphany, one would have to try very hard to find a better case in point than epiphanies *aitia* for the colonization of a city.[54] Pindar's readers may recall the epiphany *aition* for the *oikismos* of Cyrene, as given in his fourth *Pythian*, the ode to Arcesilas of Cyrene. The city was founded by Euphamos, one of the Argonauts, who on their way back from Colchis encountered the epiphany of Eurypylos, or Triton in the form of Eurypylos, as the ancient scholiast informs us.[55] The deity disguised himself as a noble man (τουτάκι δ' οἰοπόλος δαίμων ἐπῆλθεν, φαιδίμαν | ἀνδρὸς αἰδοίου πρόσοψιν | θηκάμενος) and presented Euphamos with a clod of earth as a gift of *xenia*. On the coast nearby where the clod of earth was accidentally washed out of the ship by the sea waves, Euphamos of Thera established Cyrene.

Nowhere are epiphanic *aitia* for new colonies more abundant than in Pausanias' periegetic writings: Artemis' metonymic epiphany became the *aition* for the relocation of Etias, Aphrodisias, and Side;[56] while the *aition* behind the foundation of Limera, an Epidaurian colony, was the disappearance of one of Asclepius'

[53] Plut. *Luc.* 10.1–4 and *I.Stratonikeia* 266.15–22. More on these narratives above.

[54] On colonization and epiphany see Malkin (1987); Dougherty (1993); Graham (2001, 1–23); and the papers collected and edited by Bradley and Wilson (2006). Cf. also the introduction (pp. 1–4) in Gorman, Robinson, and Graham (2002).

[55] Pind. *Pyth.* 4.19–37 and scholia ad loc. On the colonization of Cyrene, see Calame (1990a) and Cawkwell (1992).

[56] Paus. 3.22.12–13. The first and the third of these cities were said to have been established by Aeneas on his way to Italy.

sacred snakes on the exact spot.[57] The foundation of Limera was prompted not only by the *aphaneia* of the sacred snake, but also by certain dream visions (of Asclepius?) that haunted the sleep of the pilgrims (the Epidaurians were on their way to Cos to celebrate the Epidauria festival). Likewise, an epiphanic dream vision of the Nemeseis to Alexander (*τὰς Νεμέσεις ἐπιφανεῖσας*) became the *aition* behind the establishment of Smyrna, as we are explicitly told by Pausanias.[58] The epiphany of the two Nemeseis to Alexander the Great resulted in the building of the new city of Smyrna and became one of the central foci around which the city's identity was built. Smyrna perceived itself as a city inspired by the gods. Once again, debating the veracity or the historicity of these narratives is beside the point. What is truly significant is that the Smyrneans thought this aetiological tradition important enough to commemorate it on the city's coinage (Fig. 4.1) and to build around it their civic identity.[59]

In fact, tutelary deities—whose epiphanies became the *aition* behind the foundation of a city or assisted the city in a moment of crisis—were often depicted on the local coinage from the Archaic to the Imperial age.[60] Reproducing epiphanic scenes of local deities on the civic coinage, as well as depicting them in statues, frescoes, paintings, tapestries, votive reliefs, etc., may have been thought of as effective means of negotiating civic identity, and reaffirming and publicizing civic values. Material representations of divine epiphanies, both on smaller objects and on monumental architecture, must have been invested with a whole new set of meanings, and this signification process must have acquired a wholly new importance in communities with a predominantly oral culture.[61]

Even so, by the late Hellenistic period, written accounts of epiphanies found their way into temple chronicles, inventories, and civic decrees which were placed in prominent positions in the temples or in the agora and the nearby buildings.[62] These accounts of epiphanies, which were embedded in city decrees (*ψηφίσματα*) from all over the Greek-speaking world (from the Greek mainland and the islands to the coast of Asia Minor and the Hellenized cities of western Anatolia), served as

[57] Paus. 3.23.7–8. Inhabitants from all three of these cities—having received an oracle that reassured them that Artemis would show them the way—founded together the city of Boeae in Laconia on the site where a hare disappeared within the leafage of a myrtle, Artemis' sacred tree.

[58] Paus. 7.5.1–3.

[59] Van Straten (1976, 2, fig. 5). More on this topic and the cult of the two Nemeseis in Smyrna in Klose (1897, 28–30); Herter, *RE* XVI s.v. *Nemesis*, 2364. Hornum (1993, 11–14) along with Appendices 1 and 2 (91–317) on the literary and epigraphic evidence for the cult; Ascough (2005, 47–8); Stafford (2007, 83–4). On coinage depicting the two Nemeseis of Smyrna see Cadeaux (1938, 222); *SNG* Copenhagen Ionia 1237–41, 1245; and Stafford (2007, 84, fig. 4.2a and b). On the artistic representations of divine pluralities see Hadzisteliou-Price (1971, 48–69).

[60] Compare here the following cases: Artemis Leucophryne appears on Magnesian coins of the Imperial age (e.g. a tetradrachm from *c.*160–150 BC with Artemis on the one side and Apollo Delphios on the other; see *BMC* 36); Apollo of Branchidae is depicted on a Milesian tetradrachm from *c.*160 BC (Deppert-Lippitz 763); Hermes of Tanagra appears on coins from the city (Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner's *Numismatic Commentary on Pausanias*, X xii), etc.

[61] More on material representations of epiphany in Platt (2011, esp. 77–123).

[62] Cf. Busine (2012, 242): 'In the Greco-Roman world, religious practice was so conservative that it relied mainly on oral tradition, with the exception of a few marginal areas where writing was used: for example, inscribed sacred calendars, cult regulations, records of divine epiphanies, and sales of priesthoods'. On literacy vs. orality, see Thomas (1992, 65–100 and 128–50) and the introductory section in Watson (2001, xi–xvi).

supporting material for these cities in sustaining their claims of sacredness and inviolability (*ἱερός . . . ἄσυλος*) and for the Panhellenization of their sacred festivals and athletic contests. Rigsby compares these cities competing for territorial inviolability and Panhellenic patronage of a cult to modern cities competing to host the Olympic games.[63] These inscribed epiphanies operate somewhere in between the explanatory and the authoritative fields: on the one hand, they authorize the city with power to declare itself an *asylon*—and therefore to protect itself from future military invasions—by upgrading a highly localized cult into a Panhellenic one; while on the other hand, these claims on sacredness, inviolability, and Panhellenization of the local cult seem to have been modelled upon the standard epiphanic narrative of an aetiological character, as outlined above, i.e. they account for the establishment of the local deity's statue, cult, festival, and the accompanying athletic games by emphasizing the repeated divine manifestations of that deity.

The perfect illustration of this premise is provided by the repeated epiphanies of Artemis Leucophryene which resulted in the upgrading of her sacred festival, the Leucophryneia, and its attendant athletic games—gold was now to be given to the winner, while previously it has been an *ἀγών στεφανίτης*;[64] similarly, a new statue was to be erected in Pergamon in honour of Zeus Sabazios for his recurrent epiphanic interventions in the course of the battle of 135 BC against the enemies of the city.[65] Analogous services provided by the Dioscuri in a moment of crisis led to the establishment of the Theophania in Chios; and the prestigious festival of Hyakinthophoria was established to reciprocate Artemis' priceless services to the city of Kos; sacrifices and other festivities were established to commemorate the epiphanies of Leto, Apollo, and Artemis in Mylasa; while *gymnikoi agōnes* took place to celebrate the epiphanies of Zeus Osogo at Olymos; in Argos, epiphanies of Artemis and her brother resulted in the foundation of a new cult of their Anatolian mother, Leto, accompanied by a luxurious temple.[66]

[63] Rigsby (1996, 26). On the concept of *asylia* see the introductory section in Rigsby and that in Traulsen (2004), as well as the relevant lemma in the third volume of *ThesCRA* (6e).

[64] Leukophryneia at Magnesia on the Maeander (*c.*221/0 BC): *Syll.*³ 557; *I.Magnesia* 16. Most recent discussion of the *asylia Magnetum* in Thonemann (2007) and Sosin (2009). Cf. also Ebert (1982); Dušanić (1983); Gehrke (2001); Dignas (2002); Chaniotis (1995) and (2003); Parker (2004); Buraselis (2004); and Sumi (2004). In 127 AD the festival of (E)isiteria was established to celebrate the restoration of the goddess's temple and her cult statue: *Syll.*³ 695; *I.Magnesia* 100; *LSAM* 33. See also the discussion in the next section.

[65] Letter of Attalos III to the people of Pergamon on new regulations concerning the cult of Zeus Sabazios: *OGI* 331; *IvP* I 248, 49–52: *τὸν Δία τὸν Σαβάζιον, πατροπαράδοτον αὐτὸγ κομίσασα εἰς | τὴμ πατρίδα ἡμῶν, ὃγ καὶ ἐμ πολλαῖς πράξεσι καὶ ἐμ πολλοῖς κινδύ | νοις παραστάτηγ καὶ βοηθὸν ἡμῖγ γενόμενον ἐκρίναμεν διὰ τὰς ἐξ αὐτοῦ | γενομένας ἐπιφανείας κτλ.* Sacrifices, processions, and a mysteric festival in honour of the god are mentioned in the same letter.

[66] The Theophania festival (201 BC) commemorated the epiphany of the Dioscuri at Chios (*τῶγ κατὰ τὸμ πόλεμον ἐπιφανείας*): *I.Chios* 14; Graf, *Kulte*, Chios 78; *IG* XII 6; Garbrach *ZPE* 65 (1986), 207–10; *Syll.*³ 1064; Hiakynthophoria (*διὰ τὰς γεγενημένας*] *ὑπ' αὐτᾶ[ς ἐπι]φανείας ποταγορεῦσαι τε διὰ ταῦτα τ[ὰ]ν θεὸν Ἐπιφανῆ καὶ προ[ψαφι]ξάμενον συντελεῖν αὐτᾶι κατὰ πενταετηρίδα θυσίας τε καὶ ἀ[γῶ]νας μουσικὸν καὶ γυμνικὸν*): *PP* 42 (1987) 115–18; *SEG* 38 (1988) 812B; *I.Knidos* I 220, Komm; epiphanies of Leto, Apollo, and Artemis at Mylasa: *I.Mylasa* 895–7; *SEG* 39 (1989) 1135–7; decree found at Olymos orders that a cult statue of Leto should be made and put in the temple of the goddess. The instigation for this dedication is provided by the deity's *μεγάλας ἐπιφανείας [—κατ' ἰδίαν κ]αὶ κατὰ κοινὸν τῶι δήμωι*: *I.Olymos* 4, 5–6 and Blümel, *EA* 13, 1989, 7–8, no. 895; epiphanies of Zeus Osogo at

But whereas previously an epiphany resulted in the establishment of a temple or sanctuary, which was of course meant to be *asylon* ('inviolable'), in these civic decrees, which mainly come from the late Hellenistic and early Imperial age, the epiphanies of the *poliouchos* deity aimed at establishing the whole city as an *asylon*. The process of this development is not difficult to reconstruct: the request for sacredness and inviolability concerned at first some of the city's temples and sanctuaries; but quite soon it was extended to the cities themselves. The manifestation of the power of a tutelary deity of a city, though it may only occupy a few lines (and sometimes not even that) in these inscriptions, must have played a cardinal role in the formation of the city's identity and may have been fundamental in the inter-city state diplomatic discourse of Hellenistic and Imperial times in ways analogous to those of the three prophecies given to the shepherd children at the Portuguese village of Fátima in 1917 became a constituent part of the city's identity, and subsequently in the diplomatic discourse of the first and the second world wars. Similarly, the revelation of the Virgin Mary at the French city of Lourdes did not simply result in the establishment of several churches and chapels, but became the homonym for the city's sacredness and its high religious and political profile. The changes the epiphanies of the Virgin Mary brought to the communities living in Medjugorje are equally dramatic: 'the visions of the children', as the religious insiders call them affectionately, have transformed Medjugorje dramatically, from an obscure tobacco-farming village in communist former Yugoslavia to a popular pilgrimage destination and tourist attraction.[67]

AUTHORITATIVE FUNCTION: GOD-SENT PRESTIGE AND VALIDITY

The city and the temple as recipients of epiphanies

In essence, the epiphanies that were embedded in civic decrees from the Greek mainland, the islands, and the Hellenized cities of western Anatolia functioned as both explanatory and authority-generating tools: although modelled on narratives of aetiological character, they provided the city and its respective community with the required authority and validity to sustain their claims on the sacredness, inviolability, and/or Panhellenization of their local cult. In that sense, these epiphanies enhanced the prestige of the city, which appeared as *theophileis*, i.e. dear to the gods—not to mention that they also provided a kind of legal precedent for future epiphanic manifestations. To put it another way, if a city in general or one of their temples or sanctuaries in particular were worthy enough to be visited by the gods, then it ought to be respected and venerated by fellow humans.

Olymos (*πολλὰς καὶ μεγάλας ἐπιφανεῖς* | [*ἐνεργείας πρό*]*τερον μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν προγόνων ἐνηργηκό* | [*τος*: *I. Mylasa* 306, 4–5, *Le Bas-Waddington* 400, Robert, Sinuri 44, n. 1; *BE* 1944:169; *gymnikoi agônes* in honour of Zeus Osogo at Olymos: *I.Mylasa* 112; *Le Bas-Waddington* 411.

[67] More on the visionaries of Medjugorje (with personal testimonies and interviews) in Klins (2005, ch. 2) and Connelly (2007). I am indebted to Maggie Hulett for the bibliographical reference.

The same idea must have been the main incentive behind the multiple embassies (θεωρίαι) that were sent around the whole Greek-speaking world to advertise the epiphanies that had taken place in a specific polis and to subsequently request recognition of this specific polis as *hieros* and *asylos*. The recipient cities would then discuss the requests of the envoy in their *ekklēsia* and/or *boulē* and decide on the issuing or not of a so-called recognition decree, i.e. a written verification of the sender city's rights to sacredness and inviolability and/or the upgrading of the cult of their local epiphanic deity. The recognition decree was more often than not accompanied by an official assurance of the recipient city's participation in the festivities (festival, sacrifices, *agōnes*) established in honour of the sender city's epiphanic deity. The original decree, which contained the sender's requests, along with the subsequent recognition decrees, would then be inscribed on the walls of the agora or/and the nearby buildings. This was precisely the case with Magnesia on the Maeander and its epiphanic tutelary goddess Artemis Leucophryene ('Artemis of the white brow'), whose temple was situated opposite the agora.[68] Excavations have revealed the largest epigraphic archive of requests for *asylia* and sacredness that we now possess (more than sixty decrees and letters survive), which was apparently instigated by an epiphany of a civic deity.[69]

In 221/0 BC Artemis Leucophryene appeared to the priestess Aristo and the Magnesians consulted Delphi. Apollo ordered that he and his sister should be honoured and that the city and the country of Magnesia should be declared sacred and inviolable. This proclamation, including a request for inviolability, was subsequently dispatched to other cities, but it was widely disregarded. In 208/7, however, the Magnesians renewed their attempt, which this time was met with success. Numerous recognition degrees were received from the Greek cities and leagues accepting the city as sacred and inviolable and recognizing the festival of Leukophryeneia[70] and the accompanying upgraded version of the previously established *agōn stephanitēs* (crowned games) as Panhellenic.[71]

Rigsby very pertinently remarks: 'The Magnesians make no mention of a political or military background or motive in their quest for inviolability. By their own account, their motives were religious: ordered to add inviolability to the honours of Artemis, they first misjudged the character of the games that would be the fitting accompaniment for the status.' He concludes, not without some ironic overtones: 'Gods, however, tend to manifest when they are needed.'[72] And this time of need may be synonymous with a crisis (war, disease, famine, drought, etc.), or may reflect a need for the organizing or reorganizing of civic cult life (e.g. establishing a festival, temple, statue, athletic contests, new cult, etc.). In either

[68] Artemis was praised by Anacreon as the shepherdess of the city: 348 *PMG*.

[69] It is estimated that this figure may represent only two thirds of what was originally inscribed. On the Magnesian inviolability see Sosin (2009).

[70] The Leucophryeneia were held in the month Artemision, the goddess's sacred month. The Panhellenic status of this festival was still acknowledged as late as the third century AD (*I.Magnesia* 193). For the political implications of the dossier of Leucophryeneia, see Dušaniç (1983, 15): 'There can be little doubt that the institution of a Panhellenic festival was an act of political consciousness.'

[71] E.g. *Syll.*³ 557–62; *I.Magnesia* 16, 100; *SEG* 32 (1982), 1146–7; with Ebert (1982) and Rigsby (1996, 179ff.).

[72] Rigsby (1996, 183–4), who rightly suspects that political events related to Antiochus Hierax put the city in discomfort and urged the Magnesians to undertake the petition of 221 BC.

case, the community treasured these moments of extreme proximity with their tutelary gods and was quick to commemorate them by inscribing them on stone or marble, thus preserving them for posterity.

Out of the whole community, nevertheless, there was one particular group whose interests were even more closely connected with the benefits of the epiphanies of the polis's tutelary deity: the priesthood of its temple. We have already seen that, in all probability, the priestly personnel of the Epidaurian Asclepieion propagated the god's cult by editing and stylistically unifying a large number of votive dedications made by the god's patients/devotees to compose the more or less homogeneous collection of Asclepius' epiphanies, the so-called Epidaurian *Iamata*. A similar editing enterprise might have been undertaken in several other Asclepieia of Panhellenic status, like the ones in Trikka and Kos. These epiphanies would then be inscribed on stone and hung on the walls of the temple along with the rest of the thanksgiving offerings made by the grateful pilgrims. Focus creates reality. We can perhaps imagine that these inscribed epiphanies would have contributed substantially to the psychological preconditioning of those practising incubation in the temples and, along with the bathing, the fasting, and the darkness of the night, facilitating the pilgrim's mind in building up a visual image of what was suggested in these inscriptions, i.e. that the god does manifest himself in the dreams of his patients and relieves them from their sufferings. More importantly, these collections of successful personal encounters with the god must have served as a means of propagating his cult and of making a particular Asclepieion more influential than others, thus creating potential focal points of pilgrimage.

A similar twofold function (i.e. psychological preconditioning and propagation of the cult) must have been served by the inscribed collections of epiphanies of other healing deities like Sarapis and Isis, in whose temples there were also *enkoimētēria* for practising incubation. In the 'Explanatory function' section above, we saw how some of their highly motivated devotees used Sarapis' and Isis' epiphanies to establish the cult of these gods and secure for them a place in the local civic pantheon. These foundation epiphanies often featured first in the long lists of collected epiphanic manifestations (*ἀρετή*, *δύναμις*, *ἐνέργεια*, *ἐνάργεια*, *ἐπιφάνεια*) of these deities, the so-called aretalogies, which were also hung on the walls of the Serapeia of the Greek-speaking world.[73] In the first-century AD collection of Sarapis' epiphanies from the Sarapeion of Thessalonike, for example, the first epiphany in the list is the one to Xenainetos, the man who was chosen by the god to receive both him and his sister Isis into the city of Opus.[74] Similarly, in the third-century BC collection of the god's epiphanies by Apollonios, the priest of Sarapis in Delos and the grandson of the founder of the god's cult on the island, the first epiphany on the list is the epiphany that gave rise to the foundation of his temple.[75] These lists of the god's epiphanies served as a means of propagating his cult, while they simultaneously contributed to the glorification of the temple itself, which, in the eyes of the pilgrims who visited it, appeared to be divinely ordained.

[73] For *ἀρετή*, *δύναμις*, *ἐνέργεια*, and *ἐνάργεια* as synonymous to *ἐπιφάνεια* see the relevant discussion in the Introduction.

[74] *IG* X 2.1, 255; Welles, *AJA* 42 (1938); Edson, *HThR* 41 (1948); Fraser, *OpusAthen* 3 (1960); Sokolowski *GRBS* 15 (1974); Merkelbach, *ZPE* 10 (1973); Chaniotis (1988, 68–9).

[75] *IG* XI 4, 1299, with Engelmann (1975) and Nock (1961, 51–4).

Healing temples were unique in decorating their walls with this sort of advertising material, which consisted primarily in lists of previously attested epiphanic manifestations. It seems that in accordance with a popular epigraphic habit, temples used to keep a record of the epiphanies of their dweller deity often as part of, or in conjunction with, the official records of the temple's votive offerings.[76] No complete samples of these temple records or temple chronicles, as they are more commonly called, have survived, with the notable exception of the relatively well preserved specimen from the city of Lindos at Rhodes, the so-called Lindian Chronicle discussed in chapter 2.[77]

It is in this chronicle, appended to the record of the offerings of the temple which were allegedly destroyed by fire sometime around 350 BC, that we find a list of the epiphanies of the presiding goddess, Athena Lindia. Unfortunately the inscription breaks off after the third example.[78] A similar record of the epiphanies of the presiding goddess composed by a local historian called Syriskos was kept in the temple of the goddess Parthenos in Crimean Chersonesos.[79] David Braund very attractively proposes that the goddess was somehow involved in the foundation of the city and that this foundation epiphany must have been the first in Syriskos' collection that won him civic honours.[80] Did Parthenos manifest herself in the dreams of the founder of the city and charge him with the duty of building the city, in the manner of the two Nemeseis? As difficult as it may be to answer these questions with any certainty, it is reasonable to assume that analogous collections of epiphanies of the presiding deities must have been kept in the temples of Artemis Leukophryene in Magnesia and Artemis Ephesia in Ephesus.[81] Temple chronicles, especially in the Hellenistic age, as Blinkenberg reminds us, formed a blooming and most prolific literary genre that in all probability had been in constant use and development since Herodotus' time.[82]

[76] Though we possess no other recording of votive offerings or epiphanies from a temple on an inscription, apart from the Lindian Chronicle, we have other titles of literary works with a similar content: *Περὶ τῶν Ἀθήνησι τριπόδων* of Heliodoros of Athens (*FGrHist* 373); *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Πλαταιαῖς Δαιδάλων* by Plutarch (*FGrHist* 388 F 1–2); *Περὶ τῶν συλληθέντων ἐν Δελφοῖς ἀναθημάτων* of Anaxandridas of Delphi (*FGrHist* 404 F1); *Περὶ τῶν ἐν Δελφοῖς ἀναθημάτων* by Alketas (*FGrHist* 405 F 1). It is rather tempting to imagine that a record of epiphanies of the honoured deities may have preceded or anteceded these inventories of votives, very much in the manner of the Lindian Chronicle.

[77] For Timachidas, the author of the chronicle, see Richards (1929, 76–82). For a detailed discussion of this inscription and its author see chapter 1, 'Amorphous epiphany'; and chapter 2, 'Siege epiphanies'.

[78] The first and the third entries relate to the assistance and support the city received from the manifestation of the goddess in the sleep of a politician and an ex-priest respectively, when the city was besieged by enemies at different historical periods; these have been already discussed in chapter 2, 'Siege epiphanies'. The second entry relates the epiphany of the goddess in the sleep of one of her priests, so as to prescribe a cathartic remedy for the *miasma* that resulted from a suicide that took place within the dwelling of the goddess and involved the goddess's statue.

[79] Of which see more in chapter 2, 'Look at the bright side of war! The illuminating epiphanies of Artemis, Hecate, and Parthenos'.

[80] Braund (2007, 193).

[81] Artemis Leukophryene: Rostowzew (1920, 206); Artemis Ephesia: Bevan (1928, 73).

[82] Cf. Blinkenberg (1912, 406): 'Mais il y lieu de rappeler que tous les sanctuaires grecs étaient des foyers de récits de ce genre et que l'histoire grecque en a fait un large emploi depuis l'époque de Hérodote.'

The habit of composing aretalogies or temple chronicles may have arisen through the need of the priestly personnel to publicize the miraculous manifestations of their indigenous deities and thus transform their temple into a focal point of Panhellenic pilgrimage.[83] This way, the community would benefit not only temporarily, that is when the actual manifestation takes place and provides relief from a crisis, but also diachronically, that is by exploiting the aftermath of the epiphany and advertising their temple or city as a place frequented by gods and, therefore, as *theophilēs* and sacred. The Lindians, for instance, by inscribing the manifestations of their tutelary goddess on stone, advertised to any future visitor the importance of their heroic past and their local religious-political identity; while, more importantly, they were subsequently able to reinforce their claims on this heroic past with appeals to written sources, not oral tradition. In a sense, documents like the Lindian Chronicle bridge the chronological gap between time past, when an epiphany took place, and time present, when the visitor to the Lindian acropolis mentally recreates the epiphany by reading an official document about it.[84]

To pull the threads together, epiphanies, when incorporated in civic decrees and temple chronicles, may result in both temple and civic glorification and may even become a sine qua non of the inter-polis diplomatic discourse. Ample, charitable, and frequent divine revelation became the hallmark of a glorious heroic age that transgressed the boundaries of history and took on a mythical dimension. Epiphanies became synonymous with divine alliance and civic prosperity, while their absence was felt even more strongly in times of political turbulence and anxiety.[85] Epiphanic manifestations were commemorated in civic religious calendars, civic festivals, decrees, and even coinage; they became an essential part of the civic identity and invested both the city and the cult of its tutelary deity with prestige and validity, thus rendering them less susceptible to

[83] For pilgrimage as a movement from a local to a Panhellenic centre, see Rutherford (2001b, 44). On pilgrimage in the Graeco-Roman world see the introductory chapter in Elsner and Rutherford (2005); Rutherford (1995), (1999), (2000), and (2001b); Scullion (2005); Wilson-Nightingale (2004, chs 3–4) and (2005); Coleman and Elsner (2003); and Graf (2002).

[84] See more on the importance of creating official documentation of epiphanies in Higbie (2003, 288).

[85] Cf. Plut. *Phoc.* 28.1–2: 'For of old the mystic shapes (*μυστικὰς ὄψεις*) and voices (*φωνάς*) were vouchsafed to them in the midst of their most glorious successes, and brought amazement (*ἔκπληξις*) and affright upon their enemies (*θάμβος*); but now, while in the same sacred ceremonies, the gods looked down with indifference upon the most grievous woes of Greece (*νῦν δὲ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἱεροῖς τὰ δυσχερέστατα πάθη τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐπισκοπεῖν τοὺς θεούς*), and the profanation of the season which had been most sweet and holy in their eyes.' The comparison is between the Iacchus epiphany that inspired those fighting at the battle of Salamis (Plut. *Them.* 15.1–3) and the lack of divine interest in the city when, almost a century later, the Macedonian garrison was introduced in Athens on the 20th of Boedromion, while the mysteries were in progress. In his *Alcibiades* (34.3–7) there is a similar dramatic scene of the mysteries taking place while Athens is occupied by the Spartans, with the Spartan garrisons having been placed on the way to Eleusis right after the fortification of Dekeleia. Although the festivities took place as they normally would, they lacked splendour and extravagance. Alcibiades along with his infantry escorted the Iacchus procession past the enemy by land. 'He would thus either thwart and humble Agis, if the king kept quiet, or would fight for what was sacred and dear to the gods (*μάχην ἱερὰν καὶ θεοφιλῆ*), on behalf of the greatest and holiest interests, in full sight of his native city, and would have his fellow citizens as eyewitnesses of his valour.'

the powerful influence of early Christianity and transforming them into popular foci of poliadic or personal pilgrimage.[86]

The individual as recipient of epiphanies

> Far or forgot to me is near;
> Shadow and sunlight are the same;
> The vanished gods to me appear;
> And one to me are shame and fame.
>
> R. W. Emerson, 'Brahma' 5–8[87]

The common denominator in the narratives discussed above is the close link between epiphanies and prestige, validity, legality, and authority. Epiphanies function as *effective status-elevating mechanisms*: claims to some sort of proximity with the divine (spatial, emotional, or congenital), which translate effectively into claims to highly valued roles and positions in the societal stratum, since they legitimize the recipient communities as god-chosen and, hence, highly valued. There is undoubtedly a strong correlation between epiphanies and power. This was especially true for the Greek city-states, their temples, and their custom of commemorating epiphanies on stone.

However, as the present section argues, it was not just the community that was the recipient of this sort of authority-generating epiphanies; it was the individual too. In fact, in the set of narratives examined next, the very act of perceiving the divine provides the perceiver with *kudos* and *auctoritas*, and subsequently empowers him with exceptional abilities (e.g. of composing poetry, theology, legislation) or enables him to provide the decisive resolution for both him/herself and the community in a moment of crisis. As with cities and temples, for an individual to perceive the divine is traditionally considered a sign of divine favouritism, a sign of *theophilia*—which in turn bestows upon him an exceptionally powerful position within his community. Authoritative epiphanies give their perceiver the right to consider himself as 'dear to the gods' and mark him as superior to his fellow humans. Those who perceive the divine (or at least claim to have done so) are or become celebrated poets, prophets, legislators, theologians, and generally men distinguished for their piety and wisdom who are traditionally referred to as 'the Greek shamans', members of the priestly personnel (former and current), and finally gifted political or military leaders. Authoritative epiphanies either give or, if already there, enhance a divine gift.

In chapter 4, we discussed a number of narratives relating to a poet's or a prophet's acquisition of his art through his personal encounter with a deity or

[86] Compare here the famous incident from the Acts of Apostles 19:32–41: Paul is preaching in the theatre of Ephesus, while the people start shouting at him: 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.' Ephesus claimed to be the birthplace of the goddess and the guardian of her *xoanon*, which had allegedly fallen from the sky (Strabo 14.1.20; with Price (1999, 23, Appendix 15 inscription). For more on this fascinating subject see Oster (1976) and Rogers (1991).

[87] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 12 vols, Fireside Edition (Boston and New York, 1909).

deities, most notably the Muses or the Nymphs.[88] Hesiod and Archilochus were authorized as poets when they met the Muses and received from them a laurel shaft and a lyre respectively, two material symbols of poetic authority.[89] A similar *Musenweihe* scene is implied to have authorized Homer with poetic *alētheia* by Simonides in the first four lines of the so-called Plataea elegy and by some comments Dio Chrysostom makes in his 36th oration.[90] Pindar received the gift of honey-sweet poetry after having been visited by a swarm of bees, the metonymic isomorph of the patron goddesses of poetry.[91] Epiphanies may serve as a means of authorizing the awakening of the poetic talent of their recipient (as in the case of the Nymphs' epiphany to Theocritus or the Muses' epiphany to Quintus of Smyrna). Alternatively, epiphanies may influence the moulding of the recipient's poetic craft, by authorizing a specific literary project (as was the case with the epiphany of Pan and Demeter to Pindar, or Apollo's epiphany to Socrates and Oppian's encountering Kalliope and Artemis in an auditory epiphany), expressing their interest in the application of a particular literary technique (as in the epiphany of Apollo Lykeios to Callimachus), or initiating their recipient into a specific literary genre (e.g. Dionysus' epiphany to Aeschylus). Epiphanies functioned as *a seal of divine approval* for the literary endeavours of their perceivers, and became so closely associated with authorizing the poetic production of their recipients that these *Musenweihe* scenes became a literary topos in later literature.[92]

In the same chapter, we also concluded that epiphanies *in remotis* empower their perceivers with extra-structural vision, i.e. the ability to see and reveal things not visible to the ordinary eye and, more importantly, the ability to see into the future. In other words, epiphanies authorize prophets just as they authorize poets. Such were the cases of Teiresias and Phormion from Erythrae, who acquired the gift of prophecy, the first after having encountered the bathing Athena, and the second having encountered Athena's statue in his sleep.[93] When already qualified as prophets, these men perceive the divine presence and understand the divine will unlike their fellow humans, just as the Homeric seer Helenos perceived

[88] In chapter 4, 'Epiphanies initiating poetry' and 'Epiphanies moulding *ars poetica*'.

[89] For the Muses' epiphany to Hesiod and Archilochus as conveying authority see Nagy (1992), who maintains that the Deliades Maidens in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* fulfil the same function for the Chian blind poet mentioned in lines 157–78.

[90] Simonides' *Plataea Elegy* 1–4 and Dio Chrys. *Or.* 36, 10–11, as discussed in the chapter 4.

[91] More on the topic in chapter 1, 'Honey is for honeysweet poetry, bees are for honeysweet Muses'.

[92] Even distinguished Roman poets like Ennius, Virgil, Horace, and Propertius used *Musenweihe* scenes in their work. On this topic see more in Commager (1967, 2–16). Compare here Phoebus' epiphany to Horace (*Odes* IV.15.1): *Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui | victas et urbes increpuit lyra, | ne parva Tyrrhenum per aequor | vela darem.* Fronto, *de eloqu.* 2.15: *magistra Homeri Calliopa, magister Enni Homerus et somnus.* Propertius (III.3) dreamt of lying in the soft shade of Helikon (*visus eram molli recubans Heliconis in umbra*), and while turning to sing of the wars of Rome, was rebuked by Phoebus; he therefore returned to sing of love in his former style. The encounter with Phoebus is followed by another one with the Muses. In Ennius' *Annales* (frr. i–x) an invocation to the Muses is followed by Homer's epiphany to Ennius while he is asleep. Fragments and direct testimonia attest such an encounter, during which the poet must have drunk from the sacred spring of poetry and/or received a wreath. According to Persius, Ennius claimed to have been on the mountain, and was not, like Callimachus, transferred there in his dream. More on this in Skutsch (1985, 149).

[93] Teiresias: Call. *Hymn.* 5.51–84; Phormion: Paus. 7.5.7.

Athena and Apollo sitting on the branches of an oak tree—quite possibly in an avian form, as seen in chapter 1—or how the seer Theoclos saw the Dioscuri sitting on a pear tree.[94]

Poetry and prophecy share the same tutelary deities and the same metonymies (honey stands for both poetic and prophetic speech).[95] Poetic and prophetic skills are viewed as inextricably intertwined already in Hesiod's account of his epiphanic encounter with the Muses, who taught him the truth (*alētheia*) and breathed into him a divine (prophetic?) voice, so that he could celebrate in his song not only past, but also future, events.[96] Furthermore, poets like Hesiod who composed theogonies were credited with organizing the theological universe of the early Archaic age. Compare here Herodotus' much quoted words about Homer and Hesiod creating the divine genealogy for the Greeks, distributing cult epithets, offices, and crafts amongst them, and even determining their external appearance.[97] Implicit in the concept of epiphanies authorizing the making of poets, prophets, and theological writers is the idea that witnessing the divine would enable these *theophileis* men to recognize it where, otherwise, it could have gone unnoticed, and describe it to the audience as truthfully as possible.

Encountering the divine body in person enables the perceiver to recreate it through the symbolic system of poetic language. For a poet or prophet to have encountered the daughters of Mnemosyne and received *alētheia* from them invests his poetic or prophetic diction with unsurpassable strength and validity.[98] Epiphanies, then, in a sense, bridge the gap between humans' limited sensory reception and the complexity and ambiguities that surround divine substance and morphology. These privileged individuals, by having been granted moments of extreme proximity with the divine, are raised above their fellow humans, so that they can, to some extent, communicate back to them what was normally thought of as unperceivable and incomprehensible.

Claims on knowledge concerning the world of the gods were given divine approval and verification through tête-à-tête meetings with the divine. In fact, claims on any sort of knowledge that may be either difficult or impossible to obtain by human standards are often supported by divine epiphanies. Empedotimus, for instance, claimed to have seen Persephone and Pluto surrounded by divine light *in remotis*. It was through this manifestation that Empedotimus acquired 'all the truth (*alētheia*) about the souls of the dead, as it were, with his own eyes'.[99]

Even the ancient lawgivers, who claimed to know how best how best to organize the sociopolitical life of their fellow citizens, called upon divine support and authorization. According to Diodorus, most of them claimed to have received their sets of laws from the gods: the Egyptian Menas from Thoth, the Cretan

[94] *Il.* 7.17–22 and 58–60 and Paus. 4.16.5.

[95] I mean Apollo and the Muses. Cf. also Plut. *Mor.* 398c: the first Sibyl was reared by the Muses of Helikon. For more on the metonymic associations between honey, prophetic, and poetic speech see chapter 1, 'Honey is for honeysweet poetry, bees are for honeysweet Muses'.

[96] Hes. *Th.* 31–2.

[97] Hdt. 2.53. More on this passage in chapter 1, 'Divine morphology'.

[98] Detienne (1981, 105ff.) and Calame (1995b, 58ff.).

[99] Heracl. Pont. fr. 93 Wehrli = Procl. *In Remp.* II p. 119, 18 Kroll. More on this passage in chapter 4, 'Midday: the hour of danger, the hour of epiphany'.

Minos from Zeus, the Lacedaemonian Lykourgos from Apollo, Zoroastres among the Arians from the Agathos Daimon, Zalmoxis among the Geteans from Hestia, and finally Moses among the Jews from the god Iao.[100] Out of these, Lykourgos and Minos, who legislated for Sparta and Crete respectively, received this much sought after authorization through momentary glimpses of the divine (mainly auditory epiphanies).[101] Other sources imply that these exceptional men spent a substantial period of their lives in the company of Apollo and Zeus.[102] Minos, in particular, is presented, already in the *Odyssey*, as conversing with Zeus for nine years (*τῆσι δ' ἐνὶ Κνωσός, μεγάλη πόλις, ἔνθα τε Μίνως | ἐννέωρος βασίλευε Διὸς μεγάλου ὀαριστής*).[103]

Plutarch adds a few more names to the long list of legislators who consorted with the gods and received advice from them (such as Zaleukos, Zoroastres, and Numa) and groups these lawgivers together with poets of the likes of Archilochus, Hesiod, Pindar, and Sophocles, who were all credited with divine visitations and were called *theophileis* in our sources.[104] More significantly, Plutarch emphasizes the problematic nature of conceptualizing legislation as god-given: 'Were all these mere lies to keep the peoples docile and dutiful?', he seems to be saying.[105] And he concludes that even if the legislators simply pretended to have received their laws from some deity, they were justified to have done so, since the power, authority, and prestige that holding converse with the divine conveys was an essential attribute to organize constitutionally masses that were otherwise difficult to control and please.

Dionysus of Halicarnassus comments on the same suspicion that surrounded such claims and relates how Numa dealt with them and proved that his claims of divine inspiration and tutelage were real.[106] Egeria, one of the Nymphs or the Muses, was said to visit Numa periodically and to offer her expertise on

[100] The text has Zathraustes, an otherwise unattested version of Zarathustra. For more on Zarathustra and his Agathos Daimon see Varenne (1966). More information on the topic of ancient Greek lawgivers in Hölkeskamp (1992, 49–81). Moses: Diod. Sic. 1.94.1–2. This last passage includes a fascinating socio-anthropological account of the benefits of god-ordained legislation: *εἴτε θαυμαστὴν καὶ θείαν ὅλως ἔννοιαν εἶναι κρίναντας τὴν μέλλουσαν ὠφελήσειν ἀνθρώπων πλῆθος, εἴτε καὶ πρὸς τὴν ὑπεροχὴν καὶ δύναμιν τῶν εὑρεῖν λεγομένων τοὺς νόμους ἀποβλέψαντα τὸν ὄχλον μᾶλλον ὑπακούσεσθαι διαλαβόντας*.

[101] Audition is implied e.g. in schol. Eur. *Hipp*. 98. Schwartz: <*εἴπερ γε θνητοὶ θεῶν*>: *τοῦτο εἶπεν, ἐπεὶ ἐξ ἀρχῆς Ῥαδάμανθυς καὶ Μίνως παρὰ τῶν θεῶν διδασκόμενοι τὰ νόμιμα, τοῖς ἀνθρώποις φανερὰ ταῦτα ἐποίησαν*: <*καὶ ἄλλως*>: *ἐπεὶ παρὰ τῶν θεῶν ἔλεγον τοὺς νόμους ἀκηκοέναι οἱ νομοθέται, ὡς Λυκοῦργος μὲν ἀπὸ Ἀπόλλωνος, Μίνως δὲ ἀπὸ Διός. Ὅμηρος* [*τ* 179]· '*ἐννέωρος βασίλευε Διὸς μεγάλου ὀαριστής*'.

[102] E.g.: Plat. *Leg*. 1.624a–b. See also the passage from Diodorus quoted above.

[103] *Od*. 19.178–9. Schol. *ad Od*. 19.179 interprets these lines as meaning either that Minos was trained in justice for nine years by Zeus and then he reigned for another nine years, or that he resided on Mount Ida for nine years, where, under the supervision of his father Zeus, he composed his laws. A third interpretation is put forward by Plato in the *Laws* (*Leg*. 1.624a–b): Minos used to go to consultation with his father Zeus on his sacred mountain every nine years. This Platonic interpretation is rather interesting, since it implies that Minos sought the periodical reaffirmation of the efficacy of his laws via a periodic encounter with his tutelary god.

[104] Plut. *Num*. 4.6–8 Perrin.

[105] This ambiguity is indeed extended to the whole idea of deities paying visitations and thus honours to creative humans (such as poets and the legislators) and thus authorizing their creations.

[106] Dion. Hal. 2.60.4–61.3.

administrative matters. When this claim of executive *theophilia* was put to the test, Numa responded by organizing an extravagant feast to which a large group of Roman noblemen were invited. Numa brought his guest to his house in the morning to testify to the fact that his house was by no means ready for such an extravaganza. When his guests arrived later that day, they were confronted with a luxurious banquet that could not have been arranged without a deity lending a hand![107]

The most intriguing element in Dionysus' passage is that a Nymph or a Muse is authorizing not a piece of poetic diction, but the legislation and the administrative tasks of a political figure.[108] From a very early age, poetry, prophecy, theology, and law making were all considered to be gifts only divine agents could bestow. More significantly, divine endorsement—provided either by a *hapax* epiphany or by periodic divine visitations—was thought of as an unmistakable *sēmeia* of *theophilia*, a prerequisite for qualifying for these prestigious sociopolitical roles. One thinks here of Epimenides, Pherecydes, Parmenides, Empedocles, Pythagoras, and the even more enigmatic Abaris, Zalmoxis, and Aristeas.[109] They all combined professional qualities that later were kept apart: namely, they were all poets (most of them credited with theogonies or cosmogonies), seers, healers, purification priests, and religious teachers. Furthermore, they were all said to have experienced momentary, periodic, or prolonged periods of close proximity and interaction with the divine. Aristeas, for instance, who was credited with both an *epiphaneia* and an *aphaneia*, introduced the cult of Hyperborean Apollo in Metapontum and claimed that he had accompanied Apollo in one of his previous epiphanies in the

[107] Dion. Hal. 2.60.7: *τοῖς δὲ Ῥωμαίοις κατάπληξίν τε πρὸς ἕκαστον τῶν ὁρωμένων ὑπελθεῖν καὶ δόξαν ἐξ ἐκείνου τοῦ χρόνου παραστῆναι βέβαιον, ὅτι θεά τις αὐτῷ συνῆν*.

[108] This connection between poetry and law making in the sense of organizing the intellectual universe of a community was felt very strongly by the Romantics. Shelley in his *A Defence of Poetry* very famously remarked: 'Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.' The essay was written in 1821, but was only published posthumously in his *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments* in 1840 (London).

[109] These figures are often variably included in lists under rubrics like: the Greek polymaths, or the Greek sages, the Greek shamans, or the forerunners of Greek philosophy, because they were renowned for their wisdom and piety and most of them were credited with doctrines about the afterlife that were unconventional for their time. However, it is important to remember with Bremmer (2002, 27–40) that these Archaic Greek purifiers, prophets, and miracle workers should not be described as shamans, because unlike the Siberian shamans, their ecstasies did not involve excursions of the soul. Their historical existence was not disputed in antiquity and tradition has them connected either with teacher–student or with master–slave relationships. Most of them are roughly dated to the sixth century BC, with the exceptions of Aristeas of Proconnessus (7th cent.?) and Empedocles of Acragas (*c.*485–435). See Kirk, Raven, and Schofield (1983, esp. 50–5, 216, 228, 233, 241–4, 280ff.) and Ogden (2001, 116ff., esp. n. 2) on their afterlife doctrines, their healing, and necromantic associations. They were associated first by Diels (1897, 14–21) and Rohde (1925, 300ff.), and then more systematically by Dodds (1951, 135ff.) with the shamanistic tradition of the north, a connection which is presently considered to be rather doubtful. More on this in Bremmer (2002, 11–26). Other figures associated with these lists are Aeacus, Amphilochus, Mopsus, Zarathustra, Hermotimus, Empedotimus (a figment of Herakleides' imagination or an amalgam of Empedocles and Hermotimus?), Phormio, and Amphion. On 'shamanism' in ancient Greece see also Burkert (1962), and more recently Zhmud (2012, 207–20). An informative discussion of the difficulties of applying the term to material other than the original Siberian shamans, see Ustinova (2009, 51), who also provides the reader with an up-to-date discussion on Epimenides (178–84), Pherecydes (184–6), Pythagoras (186–91), Parmenides (191–209), and Empedocles (209–15) as representative figures of what she calls the Greek sages.

city in the form of a crow;[110] while Pythagoras, a public healer, religious teacher, prophet, and legislator at the city of Croton, was himself identified with Hyperborean Apollo, and was credited with visiting the sacred cave of Zeus on Mount Ida at regular intervals and practising ritual viewing of the throne of Zeus.[111]

Zalmoxis is another shadowy figure connected in our sources with both Pythagoras and Hyperborean Apollo. He was said to have introduced the god's cult to the Thracian Getae, where he also performed a ritualized *anodos* and a *kathodos* in an underground chamber.[112] In his city, where he was granted cultic status, he acted as both public healer and religious teacher with a mind to attracting the local aristocracy, if we are to believe Herodotus.[113] The same author relates that Abaris was also said to have come to Greece from the land of the Hyperboreans carrying along with him Apollo's arrow, the standard Apolline symbol (and perhaps his *pars pro toto* manifestation?).[114]

Abaris was also said to have acted as religious teacher, poet, prophet, and purifier. But perhaps the most famous purifier/priest of the list is the Cretan Epimenides, who purified Delos from a plague and Athens from the so-called *Kyloneion agos*. He was also said to have operated as a poet, prophet, and public advisor. Epimenides, just like Pythagoras, was credited with ritual viewing of the throne of Zeus (i.e. the *pars pro toto* symbol of his presence) in the god's sacred cave on Mount Ida. It was there, he claimed, that during a prolonged sleep 'he had encountered the gods themselves and conversed with them, and that he had encountered Truth (*Aletheia*) and Justice (*Dike*) too (*ἔφη ἐντυχεῖν αὐτὸς θεοῖς καὶ θεῶν λόγοις, καὶ ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ δίκῃ*)'.[115]

This is a fascinating passage for many reasons, but most importantly because on top of the standard appeal to authority by means of encountering the gods, Epimenides was credited with having seen the personifications of truth and justice. Dike and Aletheia could, no doubt, have provided the authority in the two spheres of activity where Epimenides excelled, namely in acting as a public advisor and as a poet.[116] These figures were all highly regarded by the members of

[110] Hdt. 4.13–14.

[111] Ael. *HV* 26 = Arist. Fr. 5.30.191 and Porph. *Vit. Pyth*. 17 De Place. For the throne of Zeus as a *pars pro toto* epiphany, see the relevant section in chapter 1. For the more doubtful but very exciting possibility of Pythagoras having encountered Persephone in one of his chambers, see Ogden (2001, 125).

[112] On ritualized descents and ascents from the ground, see the groundbreaking study of Ustinova (2009, 13–52).

[113] Hdt.4.93–6. Biographical traditions have him as either a student or a slave of Pythagoras. On Pythagoras and ancient Pythagoreanism see Burkert (1972). On Pythagoras and his relation to shamanism in ancient Greece see Zhmud (2012, 207–20). Cf. also 'Pythagoras', *BNP*.

[114] Apollo himself was thought to retreat to the land of the Hyperboreans during winter. For the land of the Hyperboreans being an *eschatia* and therefore a landscape prone to epiphanic manifestations, see chapter 6, 'Sacrifice'. Hdt. 4.36. For the arrow as a *σύμβολον τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος* see [Nonnus] *Schol. Myth*. Or. 43.7 Nimmo Smith.

[115] Max. Tyr. *Dialexeis* 10.1a–d Hobein. Notice that Epimenides is also called *θεοφιλὴς καὶ σοφὸς ἐπὶ τὰ θεῖα* (F 68 A DK = Plut. *Solon* 12) cf. also *FGrHist* 115 F67; Paus. 1.14.4; Diog. Laert. 1.109; Val. Max. 8.13 ext. 5; Plin. *NH* 7.154.

[116] Compare also the audition Epimenides was said to have experienced while he was building a sanctuary in honour of the Nymphs: Theopompus *FGrHist* 115 F 69 (= Epim. F 1 DK): *<Θεόπομπος δ' ἐν τοῖς Θαυμασίοις> κατασκευάζοντος αὐτοῦ* (sc. *τοῦ Ἐπιμενίδου*) *τὸ τῶν Νυμφῶν ἱερὸν ῥαγῆναι φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ· 'Ἐπιμενίδη, μὴ Νυμφῶν, ἀλλὰ Διός'. Κρησίν τε προειπεῖν τὴν Λακεδαιμονίων ἧτταν ὑπὸ*

the communities wherein they operated to the extent that they were treated as gods. At least this is what we read in two fragments from Empedocles' *Katharmoi*.[117]

Nevertheless, the most impressive and extensive addition to our discussion is provided by the elaborate scene of divine *dexiōsis* (divine reception) that Parmenides incorporates in the proem of his poem.[118] Just like a poet of the Hesiodic tradition and in the same metre, Parmenides starts his poetic philosophical treatise with the description of an epiphany, i.e. his meeting with the goddess and their conversation in intimate tones, which will provide him with the truth (*alētheia*), as 'opposed to the opinions of the mortals, which are unreliable'. Earlier on in the same poem, Parmenides gives his audience a detailed description of his journey to the goddess on a chariot led by immortal maidens (could these be the Muses?) imbued in pure light (of knowledge?).[119] Despite the traditional character of this narrative (epic metre/diction), there is an important modification to it in terms of its form: instead of having a standard scene of *xenismos*, where the deity visits a mortal, this time it is the mortal who undertakes the journey to the goddess, the source of *alētheia* and philosophical enlightenment. This could, perhaps, be read as Parmenides' attempt to express the major difference between the Archaic poet of the Homeric and Hesiodic type, who effortlessly and passively receives the divine truth (*alētheia*) from the Muses, the Nymphs, or any other divine agent, and the philosopher who actively pursues his divine enlightenment.

In short, epiphanies provide authorization for certain individuals to organize the poetic, theological, intellectual, and finally juristic universe of their community. Divine manifestations granted prestige and validity to their perceivers and their claims of truth and justice. Momentary, periodic, or prolonged proximity with divine authorities was considered a sign of *theophilia*. The perceiver of epiphanies was consequently characterized as *theophilēs* or *theios* and the members of his community often granted him or her cultic honours. In exceptional cases, perceiving the divine may have even resulted in the post-mortem deification of the perceiver. Compare here the cultic honours that celebrated poets like Hesiod, Archilochus, Pindar, Sophocles, or other *theophileis* men like Lykourgos, Phormion, and the so-called Greek sages enjoyed in their respective communities.[120]

Ἀρκάδων, καθάπερ προείρηται· καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐλήφθησαν πρὸς Ὀρχομενῶι. γηρᾶσαί τε ἐν τοσαύταις ἡμέραις αὐτὸν ὅσαπερ ἔτη κατεκοιμήθη· καὶ γὰρ τοῦτό φησι Θεόπομπος.

[117] Emped. F 146B DK = Clement Strom. 4.150: 'But at the end they come among men on earth as prophets, poets, healers and leaders; and therefore they arise as gods mighty in honour, sharing with other immortals their hearth and their table, without part in human sorrows or weariness.' Cf. also Sext. *adv. math.* 7.94–5, for Pythagoras' deification. Zalmoxis also enjoyed cultic status among the Thracian Getae (Hdt. 4.93). On Empedocles being both a 'holy man', who can heal, and a 'consummate self-publicist', see Lloyd (2003, 24–7).

[118] Parmen. fr. 1 DK = Sextus *adv. math.* 7.3.22–32 Mutschmann and Mau. See also the commentary by Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, 2nd edn (1983, 243): 'Parmenides' chief purpose in these lines is to lay claim to knowledge of a truth not attained by the ordinary run of mortals. The claim is dramatically expressed by means of motifs deriving largely from Homer and Hesiod, in matching diction and metre.'

[119] Moreover, one may read here allusions to the language of the mystic initiation. For light associated with knowledge and darkness with ignorance, see the general remarks in chapter 6, 'Mystic epiphanies'.

[120] See also chapters 4 and 6.

An epiphany followed by the perceiver's graphic (e.g. by thunderbolt) or premature death may also grant him cultic status. Paradigmatic of this premise is Pausanias' narrative, which related how priestess Iodama encountered Athena Itonia with the frightening Medusa hanging from her tunic and was miraculously turned into stone. An altar was built to honour the unfortunate priestess and a woman lays a fire on it every day, saying three times over in the local dialect 'Iodama lives and asks for fire.'[121] Nonetheless, encountering the divine did not result in equally dire consequences for every member of the priestly personnel: to see a god did not necessarily mean that (s)he would have to die, as the oracular response from Didyma given to Alexandra, the priestess of Demeter Thesmophoros, implies. Alexandra's experience was still life-changing and, as seen in the Introduction, it required further elucidation from the oracle of Didyma.[122]

It is hardly surprising that gods chose to manifest themselves to those dear to their hearts (i.e. *theophileis*) and those who, like members of the priestly personnel, were more closely connected to the divine than others.[123] A deity often manifested himself or herself to his/her priest(ess) so as to assist the community at a moment of crisis: on two different occasions, for instance, both rather critical for the political and religious future of the city of Lindos, the tutelary deity of the city, Athena Lindia, manifested herself once in the sleep of the current priest, to reveal the remedy for the polluting suicide that took place within the temple, as recounted in the second epiphanic narrative of the list; and repeatedly in the sleep of the ex-priest Kallikles, to urge the city council to appeal for help to Ptolemy Soter so as to defend themselves when besieged by Demetrios Poliorketes, as related in the third epiphanic account. Likewise, at a critical moment for Magnesia's religious and political future, Artemis Leukophryene manifested herself to the priestess Aristo to instigate the petition for sacredness and inviolability. And it was up to the priestess of the Erechtheum to notice that the sacred snake of the goddess had disappeared and to interpret this sign as denoting the *aphaneia* of the goddess herself, as reported in the Herodotean narrative. Note, however, that in Plutarch's narrative the priestess's announcement is part of Themistocles' stratagem.[124]

Priests and priestesses had spent more time thinking about the gods, their shapes, and their deeds and, perhaps through time, had acquired an eye for divine manifestations. From the point of view of the gods, on the other hand, it would have been easier to intervene in a moment of crisis by manifesting themselves mainly in the dreams and more rarely in the waking reality of a medium who had the *auctoritas* to deliver his or her message to the community. Conversely, it was these divine epiphanies themselves that granted these mediums the licence to intervene and dictate a certain course of political or religious action.

[121] Paus. 9.34.2.

[122] *I.Miletos* 481 = *I.Didyma* 496; *Hellenica* 11–12, pp. 543–6; *ZPE* 1971, 207–9, no. 8 (ll. 2, 3, 4, 10, 13, 14 of section b); Fontenrose (1978, 196, no. 22–3). Cf. also Versnel (1987, 45–6). See also the Introduction, 'The god within: divine presence and absence'.

[123] Van Straten (1976, 17) comes to the same conclusion by examining the archaeological evidence and the high proportion of ex-voto dedicated *kat' onar* or *kat' epitagēn* etc. by priests, temple attendants, initiates, and members of religious associations.

[124] Hdt. 8.41; Plut. 10.1–2. Note the emphasis on *σημηνάσης δὲ ταῦτα τῆς ἱερείης* in Herodotus; and the structure *οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐξήγγελον εἰς τοὺς πολλούς* in Plutarch.

These mediums did not necessarily have to be members of the priestly personnel; local authorities could also fit the job description of mediating divine will to humans, as is demonstrated by the following examples. While priests (current and ex) feature in the second and third narrative of the Lindian epiphanies, in the first of them, the goddess manifests herself in the sleep of one of the local authorities, thus authorizing him to negotiate with Datis for an armistice of five days.[125] Similarly, Zeus Soter was said to have revealed himself most manifestly in the dreams of Arimnestos (*ἐναργῶς τῷ Ἀριμνήστῳ φανέντων*), the general of the Plataeans, and to have dissuaded him and the Athenian Aristides from moving the army to Eleusis in accordance with an oracle that bade them fight by the sanctuary of Eleusinian Demeter and Kore.[126] Thus the god provided Arimnestos and Aristides with the authorization they ultimately needed to follow their strategic instincts and conduct the battle in Boeotia instead of Eleusis. By the same token, Zeus Ammon, the tutelary god of Aphytis (Chalkidike), manifested himself in the dreams or the waking reality of Lysander—depending on which historian we read—and urged him to raise the siege of the city (403 BC.).[127] Raising the siege of the city under such circumstances ceased to be a dangerous political decision that could be mistaken for cowardice or treason and became divinely ordained and, therefore, vindicated.

Occasionally the narrative does not specify to whom exactly the god manifested himself. We are left with the vague information of the local deity manifesting himself in the sleep of the magistrates and authorizing them to choose a specific course of action. This was the case with Pan Lyterios, who appeared in the sleep of the local authorities of Troizen and supplied the cure for a pandemic;[128] while in Themisonion, the divine triad of Herakles, Apollo, and Hermes manifested themselves in the sleep of the local authorities and authorized them to direct the local population into a sacred cave so as to protect themselves from their attackers.[129]

In very exceptional cases, the same deity appears to both religious and political authorities to make sure that its message comes across. Such was the case of Herakles, who appeared to both Pherecydes and the local authorities in Sparta to ask not to be honoured either with gold or with silver (*προστάξαι δὲ αὐτῷ ὄναρ τοῦτο τὸν Ἡρακλέα, ὃν καὶ τῆς αὐτῆς νυκτὸς τοῖς βασιλεῦσι κελεῦσαι Φερεκύδῃ πείθεσθαι*).[130] Local political and religious authorities sought after epiphanies that, in the eyes of their fellow citizens, would function as the seal of divine approval for their decisions. Now, in the unfortunate case that this divine approval/authorization did not come spontaneously from the gods, politicians and priests simply had to acquire it by contrivance. And this is how all the aforementioned cases of stratagematic epiphanies come into place. Stratagematic epiphanies involved fabricating divine epiphanies so as to acquire the highly prized seal of divine approval discussed above. Thus, Epaminondas employed the members of the

[125] A detailed discussion of the narrative is given in chapter 2, 'Whilst seeking Athena's help, move your own hands too'.

[126] Plut. *Arist.* 11.3–8. Cf. esp. 11.5–6. More on this passage in chapter 2, 'Plataea'.

[127] Paus. 3.18.3: waking reality; Plut. *Lys.* 20.4–6: dreams.

[128] Paus. 2.32.6. See chapter 3 on healing epiphanies.

[129] Paus. 10.32.4–5.

[130] Diog. Laert. 1.116f., who quotes Theopompos (*FGrHist* 115 F 71).

priestly personnel of Trophonius to assist him in persuading the Thebans that the hero Aristomenes was fighting on their side against the Spartans at Leuctra (371 BC).[131] And, as if being reassured that the Spartan Nemesis would have been fighting along with the Theban army, Epaminondas also employed Herakles' priest in staging Herakles' *pars pro toto* epiphany in the same battle.[132] But perhaps the most well-known instance of a stratagematic epiphany is that of Peisistratus, who staged his own epiphanic festival to reassure his fellow citizens that his homecoming and his return to the Athenian political scene was according to the will of the city's tutelary goddess.[133]

To conclude, gods appear in the dreams or the waking realities of a very small minority consisting of the local religious or civic authorities, a handful of privileged individuals who happen to have the power to deliver the community out of the imminent danger. Out of the narratives mentioned here and discussed elsewhere in this book only a very small minority involve an epiphany that takes place in the waking reality or the dreams of a whole community. Collective dream visions like the one of Athena of Ilion, who appeared looking tattered in the dreams of many of the inhabitants of Cyzicus and promised immediate divine assistance, do exist, but they are the exception. It appears that this divine eclecticism reflects the pre-existing power structure of the community. Power is given to powerful individuals, or those who are considered to be powerful, certainly to those who previously have proved themselves to be effective at managing a crisis. Whether perceived by the political and social elite or by a larger proportion of the population, epiphanies are treasured by the community, who are quick to commemorate these moments of divine proximity on lasting material such as stone or marble. These epiphanic inscriptions decorated the walls of the buildings where the heart of civic life beats, such as the agora, the nearby buildings, and the temple of a city's tutelary deity. The Lindians certainly did so, and the Cyzicians, as we are told in Plutarch's narrative, inscribed a stele 'that contained certain decrees and an inscription about these matters'. We cannot be far from the truth if we are to imagine that the stele must have had a similar content to that of the Lindian Chronicle, with a possibly detailed description of the divine manifestation, a constant remainder of the *theophilia* they enjoyed.

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES: EPIPHANIES AND SHAPING SOCIETAL VALUES

So far we have established that the gods usually manifest themselves to a rather limited number of people—who unsurprisingly enough happen to be identical to the sociopolitical and intellectual elite of a community at a given time. These periods of proximity with the divine, usually of a limited duration, provide them with the authority needed to pursue a certain objective, or follow a certain course

[131] Paus. 4.32.4. Cf. also chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?'.

[132] Polyaen. 2.3.8. More on this in chapter 2, 'Epiphanic stratagems or stratagematic epiphanies?'.

[133] Hdt. 1.60.2–5. A detailed discussion of the narrative can be found in chapter 2, 'Peisistratus on how to stage Athena's epiphany'.

of action, or invest their poetic, prophetic, religious, and juridical doctrines with persuasiveness and validity. Authority, prestige, and even personal glorification were also granted to certain other individuals who were linked with the divine either by bonds of friendship and familiarity (as seen in chapter 7) or by ties of kinship (as seen in chapter 5).

'Elective affinities' is the English translation of Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*.[134] This title was in turn Goethe's translation of *De attractionibus electivis*, a 1775 scientific study on chemical species and how they are combined with certain substances or species in preference to others. In *De attractionibus electivis*, the Swedish chemist T. O. Bergmann examined chemical elements and mixtures and the forces of attraction or repulsion with which they relate to each other. This treatise, pioneering for its age, features as the central concept of Goethe's novel, which—at the cost of sounding over-schematic—is a comparison between the natural laws of attraction between certain chemical elements with other chemical elements and substances, and the more or less irrevocable attraction certain protagonists in the novel feel for one another. I have chosen the same title for my concluding section on epiphanies as social mechanisms for securing god-sent prestige and validity because it summarizes aptly my overall argument on how deeply the epiphanic schema nuanced the Greek societal structures and symbolic hierarchies from the Archaic era to the Hellenistic and Imperial periods and beyond: in their attempt to perpetuate pre-existing power structures and value systems, the intellectual and sociopolitical elite propagated via various means and media the idea that there was some natural attraction between their members and the gods and goddesses of the Greek-speaking world.

As seen in chapter 7, feasting with the gods went well beyond the pleasure of feasting on quality food and wine. Sharing a meal with the divine is the first step to the profound transformation that the mortal fellow diners underwent in the course of these feasts: by feasting with the gods, the members of the sociopolitical elite became a bit more godlike themselves. In fact, gods primarily frequented the dining rooms of old friends and quite often the dining rooms of old relatives, as we are explicitly told in the narrative from Plato's *Lysis*.[135] For the Greeks, thinking of their gods as blood-related to some of their exceptional individuals was reminiscent of the old heroic race and provided another way of acquiring extraordinary prestige and authority over one's fellow citizens or those of other cities.

Similarly, in chapter 5 we saw that erotic epiphanies served a good number of sociopolitical purposes, of which the legitimization of the offspring of extramarital or incestuous relationships was only one. As discussed there, the Greeks as a culture appear to be quite apprehensive and nervous in dealing with extramarital sex and procreation. Unmarried mothers were most commonly considered to be sources of disgrace for their families and were almost invariably marginalized. It is only to be expected that in such a societal context, where pregnancy resulting from either a youthful lapse from virtue, rape, or an incestuous relationship would be met with intolerance, crediting the divine with the birth of an illegitimate child

[134] Published in 1809 by J. G. Cottaische Buchhandlung, Berlin. For one of the many English translations of the work, see J. W. von Goethe, *Elective Affinities*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, 1971, Middlesex and New York.

[135] Plat. *Lys.* 205c–d. Cf. also Stroud (1984).

would be a well-attested practice. Alleged claims of divine parentage, then, may have proved to be a very effective mechanism for the social reintegration of both the illegitimate child and his/her mother. As a result, allegations of that kind were invariably met with suspicion. Claiming divine paternity for an extramarital pregnancy could potentially eradicate the stigma of illegitimacy and thus reinstate the mother to her previous respectable social status.

Stories about mortals who were sexually united with deities of either Panhellenic status or local character were widely known throughout Graeco-Roman antiquity: they were represented on both private and public artefacts and monuments;[136] re-enacted in sympotic contexts or by means of ritual performance in cult;[137] they formed the background of dramatic productions; they were employed in political and diplomatic discourse;[138] and finally, they were to be found in various popular poems, songs, hymns, and old wives' tales.[139] Most importantly, communities traced their origins back to the fruits of these unions and identified themselves as children of the gods. Erotic epiphanies often featured in local heroic genealogies and colonial foundation stories, thus justifying claims to the land and its resources.[140] In short, they were part of a rich tradition that contributed to the formation of cultural and political identity all over the Greek world, from Archaic times to the Hellenistic and Imperial periods and beyond.

Likewise, having a divine visitor as one's dinner guest brings blessings not only to the individuals participating, but also to the entire community. As seen in chapter 7,[141] for instance, the people of Tarsus took pride in thinking of Herakles and Perseus, the mythical colonists of Dio's native city, as visiting the city on

[136] See, for instance, Fig. 7.2, and Paus. 3.18.10, on the reliefs on the throne of Apollo at Amyclae, which depicted Poseidon and Zeus carrying off Taygete and Alcyone, and Eos abducting Cephalus. On a more local level, Boreas' and Eos' epiphanies had a wide appeal in Athens, to judge by the popularity of these themes on fifth-century vases: see Kaempf-Dimitriadou (1969, 76–109) and Lefkowitz (2002, 326), with Schefold (1992), Kilmer (1993, 1997), and Cohen (1996) on abduction scenes more generally. They were also popular on temple acroteria in the late fifth and fourth centuries, such as the abduction of Coronis by Apollo on the temple of Asclepius in Epidaurus, the abductions of Oreithyia by Boreas and Cephalus by Eos on the temple of Apollo in Delos, and the abduction of Cephalus on the Stoa Basileios at Athens: see Robertson (1985, 173–4), Cohen (1996), and Lefkowitz (2002). I am grateful to Verity Platt for this piece of information and for reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this chapter.

[137] Symposia: e.g. Xen. *Symp*. 9.2–7 Marchant; cult: e.g. the epiphany of Dionysus to the Basilinna, the wife of the Athenian archon basileus, during the Anthesteria, on which see chapter 6.

[138] Theatre: Aeschylus' *Semele* and *Women of Aetna* dramatized Zeus's eros for Cadmus' daughter and the birth of Dionysus; Euripides' *Ion* explored the aftermath of Apollo's rape of Creusa; in all likelihood, Aeschylus' *Alcmene*, Sophocles' *Amphitryon*, Ion's *Alcmene*, as well as Euripides' *Alcmene* treated Zeus' seduction of the mortal mother of Herakles and the hero's birth. On erotic epiphanies in fragmentary tragedies see Cropp (2005, 279–80); on epiphanies in Athenian fifth-century tragedy more generally see Sourvinou-Inwood (2003b, 459–89). Politics: e.g. Isocr. 10.59; [Dem.] 60.30–1; and Plut. *Lys*. 15.1–3; all passages are discussed in chapter 5.

[139] E.g. *Hymn. Hom. Ven*. 53ff., Mosch. 2.77ff., Hes. fr. 140 M-W. As seen in chapter 5, unions of goddesses with mortal men are listed at the end of Hesiod's *Theogony* (965–1020), while in the Hesiodic *Ehoiae* we hear stories of gods who lusted after mortal women.

[140] E.g. Apollo and Cyrene: schol. (L+) Ap. Rhod. 2.498–527a (168.13 Wendel), Pherec. fr. 58 Fowler, Pind. *Pyth*. 9.5–70, Diod. 4.81.1–2, Just. *Epit*. 7.7–8, Nonnus *Dion*. 13.300–3. See also Fontenrose (1981, 187–8), Calame (1990a, 277–341), Dougherty (1993, 136–56), and Bremmer (2000, 101–9).

[141] Dio, *Or*. 33.47 von Arnim.

certain dates of public festivities and as partaking in the civic sacrificial feasts. Festive occasions of that kind gave the divine founders of Tarsus a reason to revisit their creation, while for its inhabitants it was a wonderful opportunity to strengthen their ties with their tutelary gods.

All in all, two things should be obvious by now: firstly, how deeply religious ideas nuanced societal values in Graeco-Roman antiquity; and secondly, how seriously epiphanies were implicated in both sustaining and perpetuating the old power structures or in challenging them and creating new ones. Glorifying mortals, that is raising them on a level superior to that of their fellow human beings, on the basis of their close intimacy with the divine, was a cultural topos among the Greeks with serious sociopolitical and economic ramifications.

This cultural topos was invariably transplanted into cultural production with diverse degrees of success and effectiveness: from Pindar's encomiastic poetry to Isocrates' extensive references to Athens' theophilic status; and from the standard references to the theophilic status of famous poets, legislators, tragedians, etc. in their *vitae*, to the conscious effort of political leaders such as Peisistratus, Pericles, Demetrius, and Antigonus to forge manifestly contiguous relationships with the divine. Construing Phye's epiphanic procession upon contemporary and easily decipherable ritual grammar (on which see more in chapter 2) was Peisistratus' way of claiming a privileged relationship with the divine; while Pericles made analogous claims, albeit in subtler ways: Plutarch relates how Pheidias depicted Pericles as fighting against the Amazons on the shield of Athena's statue; and how the figures of Demetrios and Antigonos were woven into the sacred robe of the goddess, along with those of the other gods.[142]

Political figures were by no means the only ones who raised such claims of enjoying 'elective affinities' with the divine. As seen above, individuals with exceptionally elevated sociopolitical status, such as military leaders, or individuals with exceptional physical abilities who were highly regarded among the members of their community such as musicians and athletes, were all keen to provide unwavering evidence of their close proximity with the divine. To these we should add members of the sociopolitical elite—like the young Athenians Socrates meets and converses with at the gymnasium in Plato's *Lysis*—who had no interest in shaking up the status quo; as well as professional groups such as poets, prophets, and legislators, whose professional cachet would be dramatically improved from cultivating the view that their ideas were divinely inspired or ordained. Last, but not least, come the members of the priestly personnel, whose entitlement to religious, financial, and societal privileges (not to mention their whole livelihood) depended by definition upon claims of holding converse with the divine.

On a larger scale, it was not just individuals who raised claims of enjoying intimate relations with the divine, but it was also communities of smaller or larger scale, like the Athenian *phylae*, which claimed divine ancestry from deities of local or Panhellenic radiance, or cities, like Classical Athens, which laid emphasis on their theophilic status in their political and diplomatic discourse, or Hellenized

[142] Plut. *Per.* 31.2–4 and *Dem.* 10.2–4. The spot where Demetrios first landed from his chariot they consecrated and covered with an altar, which they called the altar of 'Demetrios the Descending' (*Δημητρίου Καταιβάτου*). Antigonos and Demetrios were given the cult title Theoi Soteres ('saviour gods').

cities of the Imperial times like Magnesia on the Maeander, which would conjure up the continuum of epiphanies of their *poliouchos* goddess Artemis to support claims of being sacred and inviolable.

What epiphanies provided for both individuals and communities was a proven record of proximity with the gods and goddesses. This highly prized intimacy could be of a spatial, emotional, or congenital nature. By spatial proximity, I refer to mortal–immortal encounters, usually of a limited duration, which take place either in waking reality or in the course of a dream. These close encounters are more often than not motivated by a special kind of emotional propinquity with the divine: those deemed as *theophileis* (dear to the gods) are more prone to these sorts of face-to-face meetings. This emotional immediacy with the immortals was in turn imagined to be the end result of what can be termed the congenital proximity to the divine: those who enjoyed bonds of kinship (*syggeneia*) with the divine, the gods' lovers and their children, were subsequently thought of as *theophileis* and, therefore, as more likely to experience epiphanies. Enjoying bonds of conviviality with the divine (*xenia*) and sharing tables with the gods is perhaps a form of contiguity which oscillates between the symbolic spatial and the emotional sphere. More importantly, as shown in chapter 7, being *philos te kai xenos* with the gods was a cultural projection of a well-known and well-established societal formation onto the sphere of the divine.[143] Thus, the Greek gods and goddesses were seen as validating and, more importantly, perpetuating pre-existing power structures or actively participating in the formation of new ones.

EPILOGUE

In an anecdote preserved in a variety of sources, Pheidias was said to have carved his own face in the centre of the shield of the chryselephantine statue of Athena on the acropolis.[144] This feature was so integrally embedded in the artefact that if one were to remove Pheidias' head from the shield of the goddess, the whole statue would collapse. This story presents a good analogy for our modern descriptions of the ancient religious systems in general and our modern accounts of epiphany and its role in Greek literature and cultural production in particular. Every single one of the previous treatments of epiphany discussed in this study has been emblematic of its author's intellectual milieu and the author's methodological background and his or her culturally determined references, the same way that Athena's statue and Pheidias' face engraved on her shield were emblematic of Pheidias' artistry

[143] *Philos te kai xenos*: *Il.* 6.224–31; *xeinos philos*: *Od.* 1.313: *philoi xenoi*. Cf. Konstan (1997, 37): 'Whatever its origins, the practice of *xenia* in Archaic epic has been assimilated to the ideal of a bond predicated on affection and identified, like intimate relations between comrades, by the marker *philos* or "dear".' Konstan, however, insists that guest friendship is not necessarily inherited by the children. The children may or may not choose to retain the bonds of friendship with their *patroioi xeinoi*, their ancestral guest friends.

[144] [Arist.] *De Mir. Ausc.* 846a; id. *De mund.* 399b–400a; Plut. *Per.* 31; Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* 1.15.34; Val. Max. 8.14.6.

and intellectual milieu. The current study is no different. It does not pretend to have produced the final word on epiphany in Greek culture. Quite the contrary, it only aspires to have contributed somewhat towards a wider future scholarly debate on the topic, which will hopefully encompass not only Classical studies, history of art, and history of religion, but also history of ideas, medical humanities, social and political anthropology, and sociology.

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